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Marx Against the Peasant

A Study in Social Dogmatism

David Mitrany

COLLIER BOOKS

A brilliant analysis of the great paradox of modern history

DAVID MITRANY

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COLLIER BOOKS
NEW YORK, N.Y.

This Collier Books edition is published by arrangement with The University of North Carolina Press and the author.

Collier Books is a division of The Crowell-Collier Publishing Company.

First Collier Books Edition 1961

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 61-18128

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Hecho en los E.E.U.U.
Printed in the United States of America

To

ENA LIMEBEER

"There be who perpetually complain of schisms and sects, and make it such a calamity that any man dissents from their maxims. 'Tis their own pride and ignorance which causes the disturbing, who neither will hear with meekness, nor can convince, yet all must be suppresst which is not found in their *Syntagma.*"

Milton, *Areopagitica*

Foreword to the Collier Books Edition

"THE COMMUNIST-AGRARIAN issue, as we know from recent events, has remained highly topical, and who can say how long and in what shape it will continue to be so?"[1] The question thus posed in the Foreword to the original issue of this study has been answered in a striking if not in any conclusive way by what has happened in the ten years which have passed since then. The agrarian issue—as was made evident in that study and will again be made evident in what follows—never was for the Communists simply an economic-technical matter. It has threaded itself like a tense and often twitching nerve through their whole creed and outlook, and throughout the long period when they were only a relatively small, argumentative revolutionary opposition; and when, unexpectedly, they come to power in Russia, in 1917, that tension became feverish and constantly disturbed and hurt their unity as party and government.

New facts and fresh evidence are continually being brought to light in detailed studies of the Bolshevik Revolution and of the Soviet regime, and so far they have all tended to broaden and confirm the general story told in the body of this book. Authentic and detailed material on the way collectivization was first decreed and pushed forward, for instance, is to be found in Professor Merle Fainsod's *Smolensk under Soviet Rule*,[2] based on the local Communist Party's files which in 1941 fell into German hands and then in 1945 into American hands. On the more general theoretical issue we now have valuable evidence in Alexander Erilich's *The Soviet Industrialization Debate*, 1924-28.[3] Preobrazhensky, the most acute economic thinker of that period, had from 1924 onwards tried to show that in Russian conditions industrialization implied the "exploitation" of peasant economy;[4] but even he had not forseen where that would lead, and some years later, at a Party Congress, he had to make this revealing confession: "Collectivization—this is the crux of the matter! Did I have the prognosis of collectivization? I did not."

It is in keeping with the man's posthumous portrait that during that intense and sometimes bitter debate on industrialization Stalin was on the side of the majority who thought it necessary to conciliate the peasants, but that as soon as the intransigent side was beaten he veered round and let loose the policy of the ruthless enforcement of collectivization. And with

momentary retreats and variations he kept rigidly to it to the end. Indeed, with Mr. Khrushchev's growing influence on agrarian policy during 1949-51 the attempt was begun to concentrate even the collectives into huge mechanized farming units and to "urbanise" the rural population by gathering them together in "agro-towns," where they would live in communal fashion.

Only six months before he died Stalin had dealth again in *Economic Problems of Socialism in USSR*[5] with this worrying problem of how to absorb the peasantry into a Socialist society. It was in the nature of things that after his death, when many lines of policy and practice were quickly reshaped, agricultural policy also should be relaxed. In his first speech as Premier, Mr. Malenkov showed that he was ready to go a long way to relieve the excessive burdens that weighed on the peasantry. He and his colleagues were in any case alarmed by the cost—all losses having to be borne by the state—of the experiment, and by the difficulties in transport and administration caused by the enormous size of the new "agro-towns"; and perhaps still more by the reaction of the now collectivized peasants who, like the embittered kulaks in 1928, met the new policy with the wholesale slaughtering of cattle and sheep. So the "agro-town" scheme was abandoned; and Mr. Khrushchev hastened to blame the whole thing on Stalin.

In the meantime the whole trend of policy had had a depressing effect on production. Mr. Khrushchev admitted in a report to the Party Committee that the growing need for grains had not been met in 1953, nor had the collectives fulfilled the plan for the supply of livestock. The Central Committee sought to meet the situation in two ways: by looking for means to increase production, while at the same time relaxing pressure on the peasants. In 1953 a resolution based on Mr. Khrushchev's report decreed that the production of fertilizers should be tripled by 1959, with a further sixty per cent increase prescribed by 1964. Much more noteworthy was the decision taken in 1954 to open up to cultivation by 1956 some thirty million hectares of virgin land as State farms, and to do this not by transplanting peasants but by enlisting as pioneers some hundred thousand "Young Communists" and attracting workers from the towns. At the same time the peasants were appeased through the reduction in rural taxes and, especially, in the matter which since 1935 had most conspicuously given them a place apart in the Communist scheme of things and maintained them as peasants. A special concession had then allowed workers on collective farms to have small plots and produce of their own, but this had been continually whittled down under Stalin,

with the intention of withdrawing it altogether—Mr. Khrushchev himself having argued for this as recently as 1951. Now the quotas for compulsory deliveries from the peasants' plots were instead lowered, while the prices paid for them by the government were raised, in some cases by as much as five times.

In the USSR as in the other Communist countries the agrarian issue has been such a canker in the very foundations of the regime that, as was said before, it never ceased to be a matter of debate and division; with the consequence that every substantial change in agrarian policy has also meant the making or unmaking of leading individuals and elements in the Party and ruling groups. That happened again not long after Stalin's death; though in the new and less brutal conditions Mr. Malenkov was not "liquidated" but was allowed to step down. At the session of the Supreme Soviet on 8 February, 1955, he himself asked to be relieved of his position as Chairman of the Council of Ministers because he was "guilty and responsible" for the bad state of affairs in agriculture. Quite likely there were other reasons for his loss of power, but that only shows in a more striking way how regularly the agrarian situation has been invoked as a reason for political decapitation. In March of the same year the Minister for State farms, Mr. A. I. Kozlov, was dismissed outright. And in June, 1957, the Central Committee of the Party decided to expel a whole important group—Mr. Molotov, Mr. Kaganovich and Mr. Malenkov—from the Party Praesidium and Mr. Shepilov from the post of secretary of the Central Committee, because they had opposed on political grounds Mr. Khrushchev's policy of "more incentives," with demands for "more repression," and thus had shown, among other things, a "stubborn and bureaucratic lack of understanding" in agrarian matters and towards the peasants.

Mr. Khrushchev, now in full control, had thus turned about, as Stalin had done in 1928. As part of the retreat from the whole scheme of regimentation a decree had already in 1955 denounced the "bureaucratic system" of central planning as being divorced from reality. Henceforward the collective farms were to be freed from centralized control and allowed to decide each for itself what land to cultivate, with what crops, and how to fulfil their quotas so as to ensure "the population's need of foodstuffs and industry's requirements in agricultural materials." The turn towards this greater local freedom was much strengthened at the beginning of 1958 by an equally drastic change in the position of the tractor stations: there were about nine thousand of them, belonging to the State and centrally directed, and as they had all the machinery and supplied specialized agricultural services and personnel, they had been the

Party's rod of iron for prodding and controlling work on the collective farms. Now the collectives that could afford it were to be allowed at last to own and use their own machines.

In a speech to an agricultural conference in Leningrad, in 1955, Mr. Khrushchev had also had to admit that the policy of bringing organizers from industry to manage collective farms had proved a failure. At the same time he indicated that the Government was even considering whether to dispense altogether with compulsory deliveries of vegetables, meat and potatoes from the peasants' private plots, so as to "create a better atmosphere in the village." Instead, apparently, an increase in supplies was to be got by rousing the patriotic feelings of the peasants, for in the same speech Mr. Khrushchev declared that he wanted to outstrip the USA in the production of meat, milk and butter per head of the population, and that within a very few years. He had confessed in an interview with the London *Times* (31 January, 1958) that when the new leaders took over after Stalin's death they were faced with a complete deadlock on the land. But through a slow reversal in policy and by putting more resources into agriculture, farm incomes had risen two or three times over the past few years.

The determination to achieve better results was further shown when in March, 1958, the Soviet radio gave almost two hours to the broadcasting of Mr. Khrushchev's "theses" on the reorganization of agriculture; their main burden being, again, greater incentives for the peasants, with a corresponding and expectant pressure for higher deliveries from the land. All these indications of a more cautious and practical trend were given strong emphasis as recently as June, 1961, in an article in *Kommunist,* the Party's most authoritative ideological journal. Noting that the "incorrect tendency" of transforming collective farms wholesale into huge State farms "has not yet been fully overcome" in a number of republics and regions of the USSR, it declared that policy to be "profoundly wrong"; and also that "undue haste" in liquidating the private plots of the peasants "can only do harm," as such attempts had led "not to a strengthening but to a weakening of interest in work on the collective fields."

* * * * *

Apart from the disruption it frequently caused within the Communist parties—as it had done in the past within the Socialist movement as a whole—the agrarian issue also brought out strong differences, sometimes actual divisions, between the USSR and the other Communist regimes. There were variations among these: for instance, between Bulgaria, the first of the satellites to begin to collectivize peasant farms and also the first

to claim to have completed the process, in 1957, and on the other hand Yugoslavia, which was the first to begin to draw away from Moscow and its policy, even before Stalin's death.

Stalin's death and Mr. Khrushchev's revelations and reforms allowed or induced the satellite regimes to relax pressure in almost every direction. This was especially evident in agrarian policy; and the eagerness of most of the ruling groups to retreat in this field suggested that the true reasons for drawing back were the bad economic results of the previous policy and the peasants' opposition to it. Official figures released in Warsaw in May, 1957, disclosed that in 1956 losses from collectivized agriculture had been higher than in the previous year, with no prospect of early improvement, and that on all of the six thousand State farms production costs were much higher than market prices. At the end of their first five-year plan, in December, 1953, the Czechoslovak Minister of Agriculture confessed that the most advanced types of collective farms had given the poorest results: only 14.1% had fulfilled or exceeded their estimates, while 44.2% had not produced enough to cover even the cost of their members' labor. In Hungary, just before the rising, it was admitted that while industrial production was three times higher than before the War, agriculture had shown no advance at all. And even the Bulgarians admitted in 1956 that on the collective farms production was low and costs were high.

As in the USSR, all these regimes tried to improve things by concessions coupled with appeals and admonitions to the peasants; almost all of them reduced or renounced compulsory deliveries from the peasants' own holdings and offered higher prices for their products. But unlike the USSR, the satellites, especially the more Western of them, also revised their essential agrarian policy and halted or abandoned collectivization, in practice, if not always in theory. In Hungary Premier Nagy announced in July, 1953, that the peasants would be left free to leave the collectives, with the result that their membership fell by some 47% by the turn of the year. Poland had only started collectivizing in 1950 and by 1956 only 10% of the land had been brought together—apart from State farms on the former Junker estates; yet by 1958 90% of the collectives had been dissolved and only 1% of agricultural land was still farmed collectively. In March, 1959, the Minister of Agriculture, General Ochab, told the Party Congress that never again would they try to impose collectivization and that there was to be no return to "past errors." Instead, the process of giving freehold title-deeds to the peasants was to be expedited. In April, 1957, a congress of rural youth eagerly passed a resolution which

stated that henceforward their main efforts must be directed towards the creation of individual farms, which were "the biggest suppliers of food and of agricultural raw materials." One should mention that, as in the USSR, the repeated changes in agricultural policy were accompanied by equally frequent changes of the men in charge of it; it is significant, for instance, that in Bulgaria during the period of the intense and supposedly successful campaign for collectivization the Minister of Agriculture was changed four times between November, 1949, and September, 1952.

Yugoslavia had led the way by halting collectivization after 1952. The very title of an article published in 1953 by one of the best known Yugoslav leaders and theoreticians, Mr. E. Kardelj, made clear where lay the core of the trouble.[6] And recently, in a long report issued as deputy-chairman of the Government, on May 5-6, 1959, Mr. Kardelj gave a final blow to the whole Marxist scheme for the land. To have kept up the policy of collectivization after 1952, he said, would have caused "an open conflict" between the State and the peasants; it would have brought "ruin to our agriculture if we had obstinately continued along this road." To the peasants collectivization was the same as expropriation, and Yugoslavia had "long ago rejected all methods leading to that, whether directly or indirectly." Instead, modern methods of farming and various forms of co-operation with peasant owners would have to be used to improve production on the land. Above all, the peasants must be treated as an "equal social factor," free from any and every kind of political pressure.

Mr. Kardelj's blunt analysis in effect threw over together with the whole agrarian doctrine of Marx also the revolutionary doctrine of the "dictatorship of the proletariat." All along this had been deemed essential for the success of the Socialist revolution in general and, more especially—when against all expectation Communism first rose to power in an agrarian country—for overcoming the opposition of the peasant masses. It may be thought that Yugoslavia is a special case: it could be said that in breaking away in 1948 from the Soviet tutelage Marshal Tito forfeited the support of Communist unity and so had to fall back upon the support of national unity, and to that end had to conciliate his large peasant population. Yet collectivization was not discontinued when Yugoslavia broke with Moscow, in fact not till 1952; and Mr. Kardelj's un-proletarian dictum, while characteristically definite and outspoken, did not stand alone.

Indeed, were it not that what Mr. Kardelj said pointedly in 1959 had been for some time current thinking among Yugoslav

leaders, it might almost be assumed that he was following again, as in the years before the breach, a "directive" from Moscow. For only a few months earlier, at the end of 1958, two separate articles in the December issue of *Kommunist* dealt at length with this very question of the alliance of workers and peasants in the revolutionary process, and they performed the same if more astonishing reversal of traditional Marxist doctrine and of Communist practice. The only difference was that where Mr. Kardelj had been plain and direct, the Soviet journal advanced exactly the same thesis with identical arguments through a characteristic mixture of denunciation and implication.[7]

After referring to a meeting that December of the Party's Central Committee, the second of the two articles had an acid reference to foreign propaganda: "Our ideological work will show that, contrary to the fabrications of bourgeois propaganda, the alliance between the workers and the peasants, the two basic classes of Soviet society, is unshaken." This vague if customary reference to foreign slanders seemed merely intended, however, to cover a very precise accusation in the first article against the "anti-Party" group within the country itself: "Molotov, Kaganovich, Malenkov, and their associates maintained a wrong attitude towards the peasantry, regarding it as a force which puts up a resistance to Socialist construction. It is not difficult to see where the line of the anti-Party group could have led. Their's was a line which would have led to the weakening of the alliance between the working class and the peasants in the collective farms. . . ." There are here two points that are significant and imply more than the words actually say. In speaking of the "worker-peasant" alliance the writer of the article omits the traditional and usually obligatory qualification that the alliance must be "under the leadership of the working class." And, in the second place and more plainly, he denounces the excommunicated group of leaders for having "wrongly" looked upon the peasantry as being innately "anti-Socialist." Yet that is an assumption that was from the first at the very heart of the agrarian doctrine of Marx—as the first point had been at the heart of Communist revolutionary doctrine—and it had never been questioned till now; not even by the Western "revisionists," who during the debates of the nineteenth century were treated by the majority as renegades simply because they had urged a measure of tolerance towards the peasants as a way of securing some of the rural vote.[8]

No doubt one could add some interesting variations to the story by looking at what has happened in the countries of Asia, but it would not alter nor add anything material to it. The

agrarian issue has been and remains paramount in all the Asian countries, but it is not very relevant to the Marxist analysis for two reasons: the theoretical issue had never been alive there in the earlier period,[9] and the peasants of Asia had not risen and taken over the land in a revolutionary outburst as did the peasants of Eastern Europe.

This in fact proved something of a difficulty for Soviet policy in Central Asia. Soviet Russia was bent upon building up a group of subservient "national" republics, and to that end she had to rouse the mass of the local populations, that is the peasants, to whom land reform was something more tangible and desirable than constitutional promises. There is much irony in the way the Soviets enlisted for this purpose the help of even Muslim ecclesiastics, who were able to provide texts from the Koran justifying the distribution of land to those who worked it.[10] But one Asian story is indeed of special interest, namely the story of China—both because of the magnitude and violence of the Chinese experiment, and because of its strange relation to the course of Soviet policy, as it has been described above.

The Chinese story is well enough known. Sun Yat Sen and Chiang Kai-shek had both neglected to deal with the agrarian problem; and so it was left to the Communists to harness the peasants' discontent to their own ends. They were indeed the first and only Communist party to break with the traditional proletarian connection and to switch the Party's activity from an urban to a rural base, from industrial agitation and strikes to the arming of peasant guerrillas. Chinese agrarian policy after the Communist victory in 1948 can be divided into two periods, and during both of them it diverged from Russian attitude and policy, though in opposite ways. During the first period the Chinese Communists moved much more cautiously than the Soviets: the Central Committee did not decide to embark upon collectivization, until October, 1955, after an acute internal controversy; and the intention then was to proceed slowly and also to have smaller collectives than in Russia, of some twenty-five smallholdings each, so that the peasants should not feel lost in it.[11] Yet, suddenly, in the middle of 1958, the Party let loose like an avalanche something far beyond anything ventured even by Stalin. The peasants were to be herded into "communes" of up to ten thousand workers each, managed from a single center; all these people were to live communally, with the workers moved to and fro as work on the land would demand; and the process was pressed forward at such unnatural speed that 98 per cent of the peasant

households had been absorbed into "communes" within the space of six months.

The whole episode is as staggering as a conception as it was as a task. It is true that in his address to the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party, in 1934, Stalin had extolled the virtues of just such a scheme of things—huge mechanized agrarian units, with all the workers living communally together. But he himself had then put the question, "When will this happen?" and had given the answer, "Of course, not soon." Now the Chinese had literally run away with the idea, and were greatly proud of it. Vice-Chairman Chu Teh glorified the creation of the "communes" as "not only a big event in the history of China, but also a great thing in the history of the world." But on the Russian side, Mr. Khrushchev (as quoted by the American Press on 17 December, 1958) bluntly dismissed the whole thing as "reactionary" and as unsuited for the USSR.[12]

* * * * *

If Mr. Kardelj has found that the time had come to wash his hands of the Marxist agrarian conceptions, and *Kommunist* has found it expedient to drop them quietly behind its back, the Chinese adventure looks like killing them altogether by intemperate zeal. The agrarian ideas of Marx were of course to be fulfilled by the march of time, as part of a natural and inescapable process of economic concentration. The Chinese Communists have given a strange jolt to that historical inevitability by compressing the whole economic process and transforming by decree a hundred million small peasants into the "armies of laborers" foreseen in the *Communist Manifesto* within a couple of years. Nothing could have illuminated more starkly the theme of this book. As was pointed out in the original Foreword, this was "not meant in any way to be a technical study, let alone to offer conclusions on technical matters."[13] Nor is this new Foreword intended to suggest any view on the perennial issue of large versus small-scale farming as an economic-technical problem. The central theme of the work, as its subtitle "a study in social dogmatism" made clear, was simply this: that the agrarian doctrine of Marx, which postulated as inevitable concentration in farming as in industry, had nowhere come true as part of a normal economic evolution; and that where such concentration had taken place in the Communist countries—in the guise of collectivization, let alone in the guise of Russian "agro-towns" or Chinese "communes"—it has always been an arbitrary process, imposed and enforced by ruthless means and at high cost in material losses and human suffering.

It is difficult to think of any other social issue that has been as thoroughly demonstrated and confirmed as this one during the past decade. Almost like a controlled experiment the demonstration has produced a threefold proof. There is, first, the plain economic proof. Soviet Russia has shown herself capable of great and steady industrial efforts, and in addition also of outstanding scientific achievements—all of these in sectors which can be strictly controlled. Only in agriculture has all planning failed in spite of an elaborate structure of Party and technical controls; forty years of alternate pressures and concessions have confessedly produced only disappointing and sometimes critical results. There is, secondly, the political proof. Among Communists agrarian policy has remained throughout a matter of acrid contention, a step to power or to defeat for individuals or groups, within Party and Government. (It has been so even on the scientific side: the theories of Lysenko were first glorified and then scathingly derided, though the man himself seems to be back in action again.) Finally, and above all, there is the social proof. The long period of collectivization has not succeeded in wiping out the peasant class and the peasant outlook; instead, surprisingly and heretically, the obstinately individualistic peasants have been given, at any rate for the time being, equal "Socialist" status with the factory workers by the present Soviet rulers.

As all that refers to Russia it may be thought to be peculiar to the situation in the USSR; but if it were necessary, an element of experimental "control" could be found in the experience of the other Communist countries. While differing in many ways from Russia and among themselves, they have all had to contend with the same agrarian-peasant issue, and in all of them Russia's tribulations on the land have been paralleled in every respect. Failure in agricultural production has been accompanied by acute political discord, and followed ultimately by a retreat from the Marxian position. In Poland and Yugoslavia, the two countries with the longest tradition of peasant independence and organization, and in latter years with a record of least subservience to the moods of Moscow, collectivization has been virtually abandoned. In the light of all the endless turns and twists in Communist agrarian policy and of its evident failure to "absorb the peasants into Socialist society," Mr. Khrushchev's new idea of opening up thirty million hectares of virgin land takes on a special hue. It looks almost like a desperate throw not only to increase production on virgin land, but to take the whole issue out of the clutches of the peasants and try Marx's agrarian dogma afresh on virgin political soil.

So far at its simplest and starkest the agrarian issue has pro-

duced two points of view. There are those who have looked at it only from the economic-technical side and who, on the whole, have taken for granted that, as in industry, there must be great advantages in mechanized large-scale production. On the other side have been those who have looked at the issue with a mind for social and human values, and they without exception have opposed the "factorization" of rural life. All one can say is that the first have not been proved right by the experience of the USSR and her satellites, though the Communists have allowed no obstacles—political, economic, or social —to stand in the way of their experiments. But in the meantime, and quite apart from this disillusioning experience, doubts have crept in among Western and other Socialists.

The two attitudes might be illustrated by reference to two leading exponents of socialism in England. The present Chairman of the Executive of the British Labour Party, Mr. R. H. Crossman, after a visit to China was full of enthusiasm for the new "communes." He quoted one of the planners as saying, "As soon as we have built a powerful modern industry, we shall impose modern efficiency on the countryside." Mr. Crossman was delighted with this; though himself a former teacher of political philosophy at Oxford he never weighed for a moment the human implications of that "impose" for the many millions who were to experience it.[14] On the other hand, the late Professor G. D. H. Cole, in an article with the significant title "Retreat from Bigness," towards the end of his life confessed that Socialists and Communists "had been a good deal too ready to take it for granted" that ever bigger units were necessary for higher productivity and technological progress, while it was left to anarchists like Kropotkin and original thinkers like Gandhi to oppose that conception. "These, I know, are unpopular authorities to quote to present-day Socialists; but may they not prove to have been prophetic? Were they not, in any event, right in seeing the mass-industrial establishment not as a blessing and as a real advance of the human spirit, but rather as a means of evolving man to a mass-discipline which could make for unhappiness in work?"[15]

One should note, finally, that while the Chinese Communists have plunged recklessly into the dogmas of Marx, a very different trend altogether is finding its way among Asian Socialists. They are shifting their interest and activity from the factory workers to the peasants, partly because of the insistent presence of the latter, partly because in Asian deep-rooted religious and ethical traditions are offended by the sheer materialistic outlook of the Western industrial movement. [16]

In India, especially, under the influence of Gandhi's teachings and the work of his indefatigable successor, Vinoba Bhave, many acts of policy and various experiments are seeking to build up a new, more prosperous, but un-regimented life on the land. Apart from the activity of the Village Industries Board, the second five-year plan has provided a substantial sum for the encouragement of *khadi* (hand spun and woven cloth), an activity inculcated by Gandhi mainly for its social implications. In Orissa, the Khords of Koraput have embarked upon the experiment of *grandam,* a system of communal village ownership almost identical with the old Russian *mir.* The whole Indian countryside is covered with self-governing agricultural councils (*kisan sabha*), at village and district level. Together with the very successful communal *kibbutz* in Israel, all these activities and experiments are living evidence of a powerful spreading trend which is trying to find an economically effective, but also a humanly considerate, answer to the problems of agricultural production and rural life. In the process they are all drawing away from the conceptions of Marx and in every case are coming close to the programs of the Peasant parties, and especially to the outlook of the Populist-Peasantist movement which after being submerged by the Communist revolution seems to be gathering strength again in Eastern Europe.[17]

Books and articles on the events of the past decade in Soviet Russia and the other Communist countries, and also on China and Asia in general, have been published in much too great a number to be listed here. But as this study is concerned not with agrarian economics and its present state, but with the conflict between two currents of thought, it might be mentioned that three new books have added to our knowledge of the origins and evolution of the Populist movement in Eastern Europe: James H. Billington, *Mikhailovsky and Russian Populism,* Oxford University Press, 1958; Franco Venturi, *Roots of Revolution,* New York, 1960; Avrahm Yarmolinsky, *Road to Revolution,* New York, 1959.

Kingston Blount, Oxford
July 1961

Foreword to the First Edition

HISTORY KNOWS no other instance of a vast social movement being so misread and misnamed as the agrarian revolution that has spread over half the world since 1917. It has suited the Communists to advertize it as a Marxist revolution; but Marxist theory had nothing to contribute to it, and the practical upshot everywhere has been the final demolition of semi-feudal conditions on the land, a complete social upheaval for the benefit of the mass of small peasants attached to their traditional family subsistence economy.

It is the land and the peasant which, so far, from first to last have given historical meaning to the prolonged revolutionary tremors which have shaken eastern Europe and Asia, and also Africa and parts of the Western Hemisphere since 1917. The original Marxist part in all this was epitomized in the fantastic episode of that year when a handful of Bolshevik revolutionaries, with the Revolution already in full flood, were brought into Russia in sealed carriages to do a job of disruption for the German High Command.

Marxist theory and writings have had quite a lot to say about the economic and political place of the peasants in the evolution of modern society and in an eventual social revolution, but what they had to say has been invariably and dogmatically inimical to them. All the more ironical is the fate which, since 1917, has made every Communist revolution so far dependent on the peasants' part in it, with strange effects on Marxist doctrine and, in the end, with dire results for the peasants themselves. It is the story of that doctrine, in theory and in practice, and of the way it has affected the peasantries of Europe and Asia, that in broad outline is described in the following pages.

Nowadays it is taken for granted that a story which has anything to do with Communism or Soviet Russia must be either panegyric or an attack. I can only hope that this story will not be read in that mood. Its theme was first worked out in the early twenties, when the Communist issue was not yet so pervasive and tense, and it grew simply out of a student's curiosity to find the reason for the unnatural conflict between Socialists and peasants which was general and virulent throughout Europe, and was no less evidence in Latin America and other countries where peasants survived.

The political collapse which followed the First World War in central and eastern Europe brought that conflict into the open. In Russia the Communists had been able to take charge of the revolution, but outside Russia the workers' opportunity to secure power or a dominant influence after the war was in many countries balked by the hostility of the countryside. Some of the capitals conquered for Socialism—Munich and Vienna and Budapest—were subjected to a regular boycott by the peasants. The conflict was much to bitter to be ascribed simply to party competition, and it was unnatural when the two sections of the working masses, having just got rid of oppressive rulers and landlords, had an urgent new interest in standing together against lurking reaction. Reaction in the form of popular or royal dictatorships found it easy to play off one section of the laboring masses against the other because the Socialists were impatient with the peasants' aspirations, and the peasants fearful of Socialist intentions.

The emergence after 1919 of strong and progressive Peasant parties called for a revision in the temper of the Socialist movement if popular government was to be made secure in the eastern countries of Europe. By the middle twenties the new democratic regimes were making heavy weather against political and economic gusts and needed the united strength of all the progressive sections of their peoples, especially that of the workers and peasants. Yet how little the lesson was learned, and how unquenched the antagonism between the two sections remained, was shown at the end of the Second World War by the action of the Czech Socialist leaders. Tried democrats though they were, they had the strange idea of outlawing politically the whole Czechoslovak Agrarian Party—which had been the largest in the State—on the ground that at the time of the Munich crisis the attiude of is former leader, Dr. Hodza, had been dubious. They little realized that in a way they were thereby digging their own political grave. For in perpetuating the division which after the First World War had let in reaction from the Right, the only result was to leave the way open for reaction from the Left after the Second World War. It is the ideological springs and background of that crude political division which in general lines I have attempted to describe in the first part of this study.

During the nineteen-twenties I was much in those parts, first as a member of the *Manchester Guardian's* editorial staff and then as Assistant European Editor of the Carnegie Endownment's *Economic and Social History of the World War.* In looking for the cause of the division which I found everywhere, I was taken far back into the ideological disputes of the

second half of the nineteenth century and over a wide range of literature; and in this search I had the advantage of coming to know not a few of the protagonists in that long battle, from the Socialist Vandervelde in Belgium and the agrarian Socialist Dr. David in Germany, to the Populist Stere in Rumania and the two forceful Peasant leaders, Stamboliski and Stjepan Radić. Gradually a story unravelled itself which seemed to give the key to that conflict, and which I outlined in the essay *Marx versus the Peasant,* published in 1927.[1] It was based on much material, some of it quite unknown in the West, and on a fair acquaintance not only with the leaders and programs of the local parties (outside Russia), but also with life and tendencies among the peasants of south-eastern Europe. The first part of this volume reproduces that early essay, here considerably expanded; the rest brings the ideological argument briefly up to our own day, but especially describes how it has worked itself out in practice since Socialist and Peasant parties have variously come to power.

In later years, especially after the Second World War, the trend here discussed spread also to Asia; and we may note already here that it was the quickening of peasant restlessness which gave the Communists in China and other countries of Asia the chance to reach for power. Given the immensity of the populations and of the changes involved, the Asian side of the story, as regards practical repercussions, is as important and instructive as the European. But the ideological conflict which is the theme of this study was peculiarly European. There were two obvious reasons for this. Europe has been since the middle of the nineteenth century the forcing ground of the Marxist ideology and movement, and also of its gradual solidification into organized political action. Every European country sooner or later produced a Marxist Socialist Party of its own. In Asia and elsewhere, on the other hand, while the agrarian issue was equally alive and important, there were no such effective Socialist parties, nor had Peasant parties arisen there in time to provide a foil for the Marxist advance.

The Communist-agrarian issue, as we know from recent events, has remained highly topical, and who can say how long and in what shape it will continue to be so? Here it is discussed not as a topical incident but as an important part of the social and political history of Europe, especially of its eastern half, a part of which is now being closely reproduced in the Far East. It is a slice of history little known or understood in the West, In recent years the conflict has become more vocal and the ideological element more apparent in these political wrangles. But in the past and on the whole it took on local hues, both in its

character and in its effects, and that is perhaps why in this matter the East knew little about the West and the West little about the East. In the West it came up and was argued largely as a question of agrarian economics and policy; in the East, in keeping with the less developed conditions, it retained its elemental character as a question still sharply theoretical, of social structure and outlook. Recent events in Asia reflect the same difference, in a still sharper hue.

The very fact that in Europe the conflict broke out long before Peasant parties came into being proves that it was not merely a matter of party jealousy and competition. The division between the two groups involved a fundamental difference in theoretical attitudes and, as a consequence, in political program and action. The economic-technical question of large-scale versus peasant agriculture therefore also comes into the argument, a question debated for several generations on a theoretical basis and which more recent developments are putting to a practical test. But this essay is not meant in any way to be a technical study, let alone to offer conclusions on technical matters. Economic and other practical aspects are simply mentioned for whatever part they played in the political antagonism between workers and peasants, started and hardened by the theory and practice of Marxian Socialism.

This neglected chapter of contemporary social history forms a curious but illuminating preface to the phenomenon of the peasant revival. Taking the Continent as a whole, no other issue had shaken the Socialist movement so violently and continuously as this up to the Bolshevik Revolution, and none has so gravely perverted political progress in Eastern Europe and Asia since then. Yet most of the many able American and English books which have discussed Marxist theory and practice scarcely mention the subject, if at all; and with two or three exceptions, it was ignored in the many articles and broadcasts which marked the recent centenary of the Communist Manifesto.

In the light of the part which the peasants have played in the eastern revolutions that is merely rather more puzzling, but it is nothing new. Neglect or ignorance by western writers and students of the political attitude and doings of the peasants has always been conspicuous. It was noticed by *The Times Literary Supplement* (London) in July 1934, in an article on "Peasant Europe": "It is indeed remarkable that this subject should hitherto have been so neglected by students of politics and economics. For the importance of the peasants as a factor in international politics and world economy is beyond dispute. A glance down the titles under the heading 'Peasants' in the

catalogue of any great library nevertheless reveals at once the paucity of books that treat of the subject from any other standpoint than that of the ethnologist or the student of folklore and ancient customs. . . . All the paraphernalia of their daily lives has been minutely observed and recorded for all the European races. There is hardly a single work that treats of their position in the international and political life of Europe."

One need only add that even less attention has been paid to the position of the peasants in the other continents, though in all of them, with the sole exception of North America, they form everywhere a majority of the local population.

Acknowledgments

MY THANKS are due to Messrs. Routledge and Kegan Paul for permission to use the essay *Marx versus the Peasant* which had first appeared under their imprint in *London Essays in Economics in Honour of Edwin Cannan.*

Professor W. J. Rose, of the School of Slavonic Studies, has given me friendly help with the transliteration of Polish titles and names; Mr. L. Loewenson, Librarian of the School, and Dr. E. Rosenbaum, of the Library of the London School of Economics and Political Science, have kindly helped me to identify various foreign publications. I am especially indebted to Mr. Jacob Miller, of the University of Glasgow and joint editor of *Soviet Studies,* for generous and continuous help on points of Soviet bibliography and of Russian transliteration. Dr. Alice Ring, who had already helped with research on the recent land reforms in Eastern Europe, also took upon herself the arduous work of preparing the index.

I have to thank Miss Jocelyn Farr for the truly painstaking way in which she has prepared manuscript and proofs for the American edition.

D. M.

Kingston Blount, Oxford
July 1961

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PART ONE/THE IDEOLOGICAL CONFLICT

Chapter 1

Introduction

THE EMERGENCE of the peasant as an active factor in the political and social life of Europe was perhaps the most telling and certainly the least expected effect of the First World War and a striking phenomenon in the social history of the Continent between the two wars. It was marked enough even in the countries of the West; in the agrarian East it dominated every other aspect of the time and amounted to a social revolution. The feverish development of the nineteenth century had left the peasant behind, almost as an anachronism. All the industrial and Liberal era did for him was to free him from feudal servitudes, both on grounds of principle and to open the way for commercial farming, and also because workers were needed in the new factories. But as food for the spreading urban agglomerations began to come increasingly from overseas the peasant sank in a like degree into oblivion in the minds of reformers and economists. It was generally held that the Socialist era would do still worse for the peasants: it would be a question not merely of ignoring them but of obliterating them as a class, by putting agriculture too on a "factory" basis. But in the event it is the class of large owners that has vanished from the Continent. Large estates were broken up after the First World War over most of eastern Europe, a drastic policy which was completed after the Second World War even in that last stronghold of landlordism, the Junker estates east of the Elbe.

This has meant not merely a change in economic organization but a fundamental change in social structure. When private capital is expropriated in industry the organization of production remains as concentrated as it was before or becomes even more so, out of reach of the actual workers, as Soviet Russia well illustrates. The nationalization of an industry does not mean a return to handicrafts. But in agriculture the expropriation of large estates, at first even in Soviet Russia, everywhere put ownership and production mainly into peasant hands. This economic and social paradox is given an added point of irony by the fact that it was in no small degree a consequence

of the Bolshevik revolution, a Marxian and dogmatically anti-peasant revolution.

That rural revolution, achieved largely by peaceful means, would in any case deserve a place in history as it finished at long last the demolition of feudalism in Europe. In this respect it links up with the chain of great reforms which emancipated the peasantry at various times during the past century, yet there are also differences between the two periods which show plainly how the recent changes in eastern Europe move on quite another historic plane. It had been a chief trait of previous reforms that the peasant had to purchase his new status. He was freed from feudal servitudes, but he had to pay the landlord compensation in one form or another; in most cases he also had to give up part of the land he had used up to that time and which generally just about met the needs of himself and his family. Thus the peasant emerged from the social servitude only to fall into economic dependence. In our time the peasants of eastern Europe through sweeping reforms after the two World Wars got possession of nearly all the land, and that either without any compensation or against a limited compensation which the fall of the currencies often rendered nominal. At the same time they secured actual or potential political power through a wider franchise, and with this a new group consciousness of their own, a will and a mind to use their economic and political power for the advancement of peasant interests.

The strength of the peasantry even on the European Continent has thus been much increased by these changes. As in other continents, and in India and China in particular, peasants make up the bulk of the population, it will be realized that over the world as a whole peasants are an overwhelming part of the economic and social strata, and that for the moment their number and power have actually grown. What is equally important is that they have also acquired an increasing sense of their own standing and interests as a class. That it an altogether new phenomenon. Peasant revolts and peasant risings have been numerous in history, but they were sporadic outbursts against immediate and local misery and oppression, without any clear sense of a common scheme of things, without any continuity in purpose and action. Now they had grown to actual or possible political power through new electoral arrangements or the sheer weight of their importance in the national scheme of things, and had learned to organize parties and movements bent upon continuous action for specific ends of their own.

The mere comparison, for example, of the broken state and sullen temper of the Russian countryside after the emancipa-

tion of 1861 with its defiant spirit after the Revolution of 1917 reveals—the proletarian dictatorship notwithstanding—all that is novel in the recent changes and fraught with strange possibilities. The especially peculiar aspect of this peasant revival was the hostility it brought out between them and the class of industrial workers. They had in the past shared the same miseries, as in the mass they now shared the same aspirations towards a better life. Yet in action they have marched separately and more than once have thereby checked the progress of the new life towards which both were striving. In the countries of central and eastern Europe after the First World War the fall of the autocracies and of the aristocratic ruling groups had at last opened to those peoples the way towards a freer and richer life of their own. Yet everywhere and at once peasants and workers found themselves opposing each other, often bitterly and sometimes bloodily. During the last war the resistance movements appeared in a time of common need to have brought the two sections of the working class together again, as they had generally stood together before 1848. But the division which was so quick and violent after 1919 reappeared after the recent war. In country after country, from France to Bulgaria and Poland, workers and peasants organized again in separate formations. Their general social aspirations remained close to each other, but in action they seemed unable to avoid being divided.

Such a perverted state of things is not easily explained. Though the spark which fired the peasant revival came from the First World War and its aftermath, many forces had helped to collect the tinder during the past few decades. One would hardly have suspected Marxism of being one of them. It was so utterly concerned with the industrial proletariat as to seem annoyed at the very existence of a needy and clamorous rural class. But Marxism owes much of its influence to its coming into being when economic and political issues were everywhere throwing the masses into ferment; and while the radical virus naturally was more active among the compact industrial masses, the slower-moving countryside could not have remained altogether untouched by it. Modern education and means of communication were bringing the great public controversies into the village; and the ruinous agricultural crises of the eighties and nineties made the village ripe for a stimulus that would push it into line among the contending popular forces. Much of that stimulus, it would seem, was supplied by Marxism, though indirectly and not with intent.

On the Continent until the sixties the peasants had gone hand in hand with the townspeople, intellectuals and workers,

in the common struggle against autocracy and the privileged aristocratic class. The evils they resented were local, specific and personified in local rulers or aristocratic landowners and their officials. The suffering groups may have been active in different walks of life and their interests in these distinct from each other, but as rebellious radicals they had a clear common interest and goal—to get rid of arbitrary government and oppressive privileges. With the growth of industry the social problems of the working masses in town and country became more differentiated, but the political break between them did not come until the workers fell under the influence of the doctrine and temper of Marxist Socialism. It was a doctrine based upon the facts of industrial evolution and devised for the benefit of industrial workers. Its central demand for the collective ownership and the large-scale use of the means of production flouted the traditional ways and claims of the peasantry. Above all, with Marxism the enemy became historical and intangible, not easily apprehended by country folk who learn from day-to-day experience, while the goal was so narrowly defined that it left no room for a common but diversified society, and no sense in a common revolutionary action to bring it about.

Throughout central and western Europe the passage of the workers from Liberalism to Socialism drove the peasants from Liberalism to Conservatism. Further east, in the agrarian countries of Europe, there was no room for workers' parties. A popular movement could rest only on the peasant masses. Many Russian Socialists drew away from Marxism and, trying to adapt the social philosophy of Socialism to the special structure of their country, developed the Populist doctrine. Its fitness was proved by the eager acceptance it found in the neighboring peasant countries, Slav and non-Slav alike, and the natural foundation it provided in time for the rise of the new peasant movement. Before Marx many social reformers and philosophers had taken a keen interest in the land; from the Physiocrats to Henry George the land had been indeed a main objective of reformatory zeal. There were two good reasons for this. As a factor in production land possessed the eternal distinction of being man's elementary source of living; and socially "the raw material of the soil" was peculiar in that it could not be fitted into the prevailing doctrine which justified property because it insured to each the product of his labor and of his abstinence. But while many reformers had shown an interest in the land and some in agriculture, none had taken an interest in the peasant as such—with one exception, Proudhon. His sympathy for the peasant was something unique in the

history of Socialism, but it is an exception which strikingly proves the rule.

Proudhon, who in general suspected the constricting effects of large economic units, had economic and philosophic reasons for wishing to see each peasant owner of his farm.[2] But when he speaks of this as the means of "consumating the marriage of man with nature," his very language reveals how much he was moved by the innate attachment of the countryman born and bred to the soil and to those who tilled it. His agrarian socialism was indeed a socialism for the peasants. Marx also in his early writings showed occasional startling traces of Utopian influence in idealizing freedom in the choice of occupation; as when for instance he contrasted the capitalist system of production, in which every man was kept chained to a rigid sphere of activity, with the ideal of a regulated Communist society, in which each man would be able "to do this to-day and that to-morrow, to hunt in the morning, to fish in the afternoon, to carry on cattle-breeding in the evening," and so on.[3] But while Marx and his disciples were greatly in Proudhon's debt as critics of existing society, and eagerly used his arguments against the principle of property,[4] they turned them also against the small rural property which Proudhon had idolized. They paid attention to the peasants only because they looked upon them with a dislike in which the townsman's contempt for all things rural and the economist's disapproval of small-scale production mingled with the bitterness of the revolutionary collectivist against the stubbornly individualistic tiller of the soil.

Spurred by these coalesced prejudices and theories Marxism proclaimed a holy war against the peasants and thereby unwittingly played a subtle but decisive role in shaping their political outlook. It was an ideological and political war which culminated in the liquidation of the Russian peasantry by the victorious Soviets. The conclusion that the division between workers and peasants came about with the rise and growth of Marxist Socialism may seem to be put in question by one peculiar aspect of recent events. In the eastern countries under Russian occupation or influence the Socialists have stood by their traditional position in this dogmatic and social conflict, whereas Communists everywhere seem to have pressed on the contrary for the division of the land in very small plots to the largest possible number of poor peasants. The economic effect will be mentioned later on, but the immediate reason must remain a matter for conjecture. It is as easy to argue that the Communists wanted to gain the support of the poorer peasants for

themselves or for the regimes in which they played a leading part without being in a majority, as that they chose deliberately to push through an uneconomic organization of agriculture. Whatever the immediate drawbacks, or because of them, such a move might bring the derelict new peasant proprietors to submit more readily to a policy of collectivization. There had never been any sign in Soviet policy, or elsewhere, that Marxism had commuted the sentence of death passed by Marx upon the peasant.

Chapter 2

The Agrarian Theory of Marx

WHAT DISTINGUISHED Marx from his Utopian predecessors was that he, like the economists, regarded the agrarian problem from the angle of production rather than from that of social organization. To him, as to the Liberal economists, large-scale production was the first condition for general well-being. That condition was clearly being realized in one field by the Industrial Revolution; Marx took it for granted that the same process was bound to take place also in agriculture. Indeed, it was the change in industry which prepared the ground for building up capitalist agriculture: that change was "completing the divorce between husbandry and domestic industry,"[5] while it was also producing the machines that were to make capitalist farming possible. To Marx this was not a process that was yet to come but one already at work in his own time. The advance of capitalist farming was evident in England and well on the way in Germany. France, for various reasons, formed an exception which in the opinion of Marx merely confirmed the rule that peasant farming was doomed. "Property acquired by one's own labor, by one's own effort, by one's own merit. Are you speaking of the petty bourgeois, of the small peasant property which was before the bourgeois property? We do not need to do away with it. The evolution of industry has done and is daily doing away with it."[6]

It was dying from quite a number of ills at one and the same time. The peasant was losing the much-needed supplementary income which he had derived from his domestic industry; the inclosures and the usurpation of common land were depriving him of his second stand-by, cheap means of keeping animals. As he had sunk his small capital into the purchase of land he

had to borrow for cultivation, so that his life as an autonomous producer was being squeezed out between the forefinger of the tax-collector and the thumb of the usurer. In the market he could not meet the competition of the "plantation or large-scale producer"; above all, there was the natural superiority of capitalist production. These circumstances were bound to have the effect, serious for society and fatal for the peasant, of the "gradual impoverishment and exhaustion of the soil" subjected to cultivation on a small scale. Capitalism, science, the course of events and the interests of society all combined to "condemn small-scale peasant farming to gradual extinction, without appeal and without mercy."[7]

If the peasant could yet hold his head above the capitalist flood it was because of his peculiar economic position. He was owner and capitalist and worker in one and, therefore, could content himself with only "wages" as a reward for his enterprise. In other words, he could afford to sell his produce at the actual cost of production, renouncing all rent and profit in so far as these were not pledged in advance for the payment of debts or other charges. That is why in peasant countries the price of foodstuffs was lower than in the countries with poverty and by no means of the productivity of his labor."[8] Or, as a much-quoted work put it in the seventies, the peasant survived "by super-human labor and sub-human life."[9] Hence the "absolute margin" of a small peasant exploitation seemed to be "merely the wages of labor, which he was paying to himself, after deducting the actual outlay."[10] Incidentally that explained how the peasant could and did pay a higher price for land than the capitalist farmer or the large landowner.

These arguments were, of course, part and parcel of Marx's theory of value. For their understanding it is especially necessary, however, to put our minds back into the time and milieu in which he was writing. Marx was living in England, as Henry George was to live in California,[11] at a period when everything seemed to point to the concentration of land in the hands of a few large owners. His description of the agricultural situation was based on the life of the English laborer and of the pitiable Irish peasantry about the middle of the last century. He had argued that "land grabbing on a great scale," as in the English inclosures, "is the first step in creating a field for the establishment of large-scale agriculture"; to which Engels added in the fourth German edition of *Capital* that "this applies equally to Germany," especially her eastern part, where inclosures were extensive in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Marx had further argued that formerly the peasants produced means of subsistence and raw materials which they

mostly consumed themselves, but that expropriation and industrialization had ruined the domestic industry of such peasants as survived. Neither of these arguments, however, was true of eastern Europe; there subsistence farming was still the rule and, with rare exceptions, the large estates continued to be tilled by the peasants.[12]

That general conclusions based on such limited observations were likely to go astray does not matter here. We need only note that Marx himself was satisfied that in agriculture as in industry property was becoming increasingly concentrated. He said so in the Communist Manifesto; and in inaugurating the International in 1864 he capped this by adding that if all the land were to get into a few hands the agrarian problem would be much simplified, that is, for the Socialist revolution.

The prolific Socialist literature shows how completely Marx dominated the mind of the movement at the time. Scientific inquiry into agrarian problems had not yet begun and his plausible parallelism between agriculture and industry seemed incontrovertible.[13] But soon after the appearance of the third volume of *Capital* in 1894 the planks of the Marxist platform began to give way. The German population census of 1895 (the first since 1882) disclosed the peasant's astounding refusal to die. Between 1882 and 1895 the number of holdings of 2 to 20 hectares had increased by 1.26 per cent and the total surface they covered by 659,259 hectares (about 1,650,000 acres). The same phenomenon was reported from countries as different as the United States and Holland. And the German census of 1907 killed the concentration theory altogether. It showed that notwithstanding the many favors which capitalist agriculture had received from the State during the preceding years, large estates and farms were constantly losing ground.

That discovery went right to the heart of the Marxist system. Even that staunch disciple, Kautsky, had to admit that if the figures were right, "if the capitalists are on the increase and not the proletariat," then the Socialist state was fading away into the mist. But were the figures right? By rearranging them so as to show the "class" rather than the area of the farming unit Lenin tried to prove that they were wrong; but Kautsky a little later more cautiously argued that while the figures were definite enough as they stood, they did not really tell the whole story.[14] For if in agriculture concentration was not visible in the form of production yet it was active in the form of ownership. Everywhere the same process could be traced: "Farming detaches itself from the ownership of the land." Moreover, the growing indebtedness of the smallholder was making him owner of a "phantom-property, a vampire property."[15] Behind the

scenes capitalist owners and money-lenders were achieving between them the agrarian concentration foreseen by Marx. "The farm unit remains," wrote Kautsky, "but the independence of the farmer has become a myth."

It was a clever break out of a tight corner and the argument remained for many a day a mainstay of Marxists who had to fence with a logic of facts. Some years ago an American writer, Mr. Harry Laidler, advanced this theory a step further by pointing out that many functions—not only spinning, and weaving, but also cheese and butter-making, cotton-ginning, rice-hulling, meat-packing as well as the manufacture of implements and fertilizers—have "left the farm" and become concentrated.[16] Whether "this be agricultural concentration *per se* or not, it has undoubtedly rendered . . . the lack of concentration on the farm a less important social phenomenon." This was a great improvement on Kautsky's makeshift argument. For if the peasants were indeed heavily in debt, so in many countries, for instance in Prussia, were the large owners.[17] And if Kautsky's point about "concentration in ownership," as apart from production, was valid for agriculture, then its effect must be to prove the opposite, namely a rapid deconcentration, in industry, where many big undertakings were owned by a large number of small shareholders.[18] Mr. Laidler, on the other hand, by frankly dropping Marx's untenable premise of concentration in agriculture, and arguing that some of its functions were being concentrated away from it, was able to circumvent at least the most telling criticism which Marx's agrarian theory had to sustain.

The core of Marx's economic analysis, as of his theory, was an elemental belief in the superiority, and hence in the necessity, of large-scale production. This was perfectly clear in industry and could not be true also in other fields of production. No part of Marx's economic theory was more uncritically accepted than this. The rapid extension of mechanical devices dominated the life and imagination of the time. Even those who doubted the views of Marx on the concentrations of property adapted their criticism to his view on the indispensable concentration of production; and Lenin, who was ready to make tactical concessions, reasserted this part of the theory as late as 1913.[19] Marx had not based it solely on an *a priori* analogy with the trend in industry. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had witnessed an increase in large estates at the expense of small owners, and this had not yet ceased in the seventies. As that change had been accompanied by a fall in the rural population, it was plausibly inferred that farming on a large scale had raised the productivity of agricultural labor.[20]

Although this is not the place to join in the heated and endless debate on large *versus* small scale production in agriculture,[21] it may clarify later events to point out that the increase in large estates had often been achieved by political and social pressure (through inclosures and partly as the price for the emancipation of the peasants), and did not represent simply the victory of the better system in free competition. Nor had it always meant a step towards "scientific production," raising the productivity of the soil, as the English inclosures and the *latifundia* of Italy and eastern Europe testify. At any rate, about the seventies the trend towards concentration was not only checked but was gradually reversed.[22] With the fall in corn prices small farms must have become sufficiently profitable for they fetched a higher relative price in the market than the large farms.

It is not easy to estimate the various elements which make up that advantage. Some of the earlier Marxist protagonists seem to have anticipated the issue, and reversing the theory of value as applied to industry they argued, as for instance in a document issued by the International from Geneva in 1869, that it was not labor but the qualities of the soil which determined results. They concluded from this that land, like minerals, must become social property. While it is true that the productivity of the soil has risen during the nineteenth century (from three to fourfold, according to experts), the use of machinery had only a small share in this. The organic nature of agricultural production has often made it depend rather on more intensive labor for an increase in output, according to the nature of the crops. Where these require intensive cultivation it has meant a greater application of human effort, and this has favored the small cultivator because paid labor is expensive and difficult to supervise. Experience would almost suggest that often it is the smallholder and not the capitalist farmer who could best satisfy the Marxist demand for scientific, prolific cultivation.[23]

Chapter 3

The Agrarian Program of Socialism

THE ORIGINAL views of Marx on agrarian development, based on the English model and forming part of his theory of rent, were followed thereafter by all orthodox Marxists; and that in spite of the statement of Engels that Marx himself had come

to have doubts about their validity where, as in eastern Europe, farming was not capitalistic. But in western Europe also, the later trends in agriculture seemed to contradict the two main premises on which Marx had based his doctrine, and a few leading Socialists like Bernstein[24] and Dr. David[25] in Germany, came out in support of the view that peasant agriculture was proving itself able to survive and could produce a co-operative socialism if assisted by a suitable policy. Marx had laid it down that in agriculture, as in industry, the large producer was bound to displace the small farmer. In actual fact just the opposite had happened, even if one stopped short of the peasant revival which set in with the Russian Revolution. Far from moving the same way the two fields of economic activity would almost seem to have stood in each other's way. Vandervelde, the Belgian Socialist leader, had pointed out that "the great farms, employing a larger or smaller number of paid laborers, have tended to diminish rather than increase" just in the countries with the most developed capitalist industry.[26] Marx had further assumed that the loss to the peasant would be the gain of society, as its needs could be satisfied more generously only by large-scale production. His mistake on this point seemed even more fatal to his system. It entitled people to ask not only whether the Marxist historical analysis was valid, but even whether Socialist doctrine was justified in all its parts. If in many sides of what was still the chief industry of our world the poor, neglected smallholder could hold his own against the large, resourceful capitalist, was the Socialist solution necessary for bettering either the life of the individual or that of society as a whole? In eastern Europe, as we shall see, many ardent social reformers concluded that it was not. In essence this was merely to take to its logical conclusion the revision which western Socialists had been forced, grudgingly and apologetically, to impose on Marx's agrarian program.

The early Marx never had any qualms about the soundness of his doctrine. He decreed it *ex cathedra* in the Communist Manifesto long before seeking to expound it scientifically in his *Capital*. The starting point of the agrarian problem that had to be faced was the elemental fact that the peasant was doomed; and he was doomed because he was a peasant. "The evil to which the French peasant is succumbing is just his dwarfholding, the partition of the soil, the form of tenure which Napoleon consolidated in France."[27] This was not a calamity, for the peasant's was "the most primitive and irrational form of exploitation."[28] Moreover, such an economic system was bound to make of the people chained to it "a class of barbarians," "uniting in itself all the crudeness of primitive social forms

with all the tortures and all the misery of modern society."[29] Neither the peasant nor his system was compatible with progress, and the development of society was overcoming them both. That was the essence of the Marxist program. It was in truth less an economic program than a historical decree. In an interesting passage of his *Anti-Dühring* Engels put this in dialectical terms:

> All civilized peoples begin with the common ownership of the land. With all peoples who have passed a certain primitive stage in the course of the development of agriculture, this common ownership becomes a fetter on production. It is abolished, negated, and after a longer or shorter series of intermediate stages is transformed into private property. But at a higher stage of agricultural development, brought about by private property in land itself, private property in land becomes in its turn a fetter on production, as is the case to-day both with small and large ownership. The demand that it also be negated, that it should once again be transformed into common property, necessarily arises. But this demand does not mean the restoration of the old original common ownership, but the institution of a far higher and more developed form of possession in common which, far from being a hindrance to production, on the contrary for the first time frees production from all fetters and gives it the possibility of making full use of modern chemical discoveries and mechanical inventions.

In keeping with this, the Communist Manifesto did not play about with palliatives. It went straight to the goal, urging as a first step the "expropriation of the land and use of the rent for State needs," and then the scientific cultivation of the soil upon a "common plan" by means of "armies of laborers."[30] Rural and urban industries would thus work hand in hand and so gradually do away with the opposition between town and country.

The argument that nothing could be done without large-scale production could not fail to grip the Socialist mind in the seventies and eighties, nor has it ever been altogether expunged from it. The particular meaning of the point for Socialist policy was popularly demonstrated in a little book by a picturesque German tailor with a Roman name living in London.[31] The small peasant, he explained, produced mainly for himself, the capitalist farmer mainly for the market. But the industrial workers depended on purchased foodstuffs and these they coud not get from the peasant; hence the old peasant economy was incompatible with the new industrialized state. It was not possible, therefore, to do as Mill suggested and transform the worker back into a peasant; on the contrary, one must transform the peasant into a laborer and have the nation-

alized soil tilled by local guilds under the control of society as a whole.

This idea of guilds or co-operatives of production became a staple Socialist demand, as also for mining, railways and so on. It was the line of action chosen by Lassalle's first German Socialist Party and was found as far east as in the 1892 program of the Rumanian Social-Democratic Party. The latter wanted landed estates to be gradually brought up and together with state properties made into an inalienable public domain, to be leased to syndicates of agricultural workers.[32] In fact the Socialist program had to face two separate practical issues: how the land was to be held and how it was to be worked. As regards land tenure, the question of nationalizing the land was raised for the first time at the second Congress of the Socialist International, at Lausanne, in 1867 (the first Congress had met at Geneva, in 1866). The German, Belgian and English delegates were in favor of nationalizing land and agriculture, while the French and Italians favored rather individual property. During the long and tense debate, the plea for small holdings put forward by some Proudhonist delegates from France—characteristically on the ground that it was a necessary condition for personal freedom—was angrily swept aside, not to be heard again for a good many years. On the other hand, the demand for the nationalization of the land found much support, at times with quaintly un-Marxist ethical arguments, the English delegates being its doughtiest champions. By the time of the third Congress (Brussels, 1868) the Socialist tendency had hardened; two reports on the question of property stood firmly for collective property in land, on grounds both of economic evolution and of social justice. "The soil, with all that is within and on it, is a gift of Nature and therefore an untransferable common property of the whole human society." This claim has remained ever since a formal part of the Socialist platform. Public domains and large estates were to be expropriated first. But what was one to do with the peasant? He was doomed to extinction, that much was settled, but as long as he survived he had to be treated one way or another, and a decision was not easy. For if he was not a proletarian neither was he a capitalist. Bebel alone was impenitently consistent when he argued (in 1870) that as the small farms were the most backward they should be the first to be expropriated. Most of the leaders preferred to begin with nationalizing the large estates and let the peasant be either converted or confounded by the sure action of events.

At the fourth, and last, congress of the International (Basle, 1869) the issue of property stood first on the agenda. The con-

gress was for the abolition of private property in land but willing, as a transition, to let small farmers who worked their own land to go on using it for their lifetime, without paying any rent. It proved more difficult to reach anything like agreement concerning the way in which agriculture should be carried on in the Socialist society. There was much random argument on this point at the Basle Congress; some of the members wanted the land to be farmed by the State and others by communes (i.e., boroughs), while another group advocated its being leased to individual farmers or to special agricultural cooperatives. In the end the Congress agreed to a short resolution which, while reaffirming the need for communal ownership, urged "all sections to study the practical means for carrying it out."

This was a field of production in which Socialist leaders had little experience,[33] and even the layman could see that large-scale organization would be a much more complex task in farming than in industry. Moreover, the formal question of ownership was bound to remain academic until the Socialists should acquire power to settle it according to their beliefs, but as regards the manner of production they had to face some practical issue or other at every step of their public activities. The incidence of taxation and of customs duties, the granting of a subsidy for certain crops, the supply of credit or of transport facilities and many other things could weigh the balance not a little in favor of one or the other form of exploitation; and as these were matters generally within the power of the State, Socialists in Parliament and elsewhere had to take a plain line towards public measures concerning agriculture. In most Continental countries the issue between favoring the larger farmer, whether owner or tenant, or the peasant was pretty clear-cut. Socialists in those countries, therefore, found themselves in a cruel dilemma which was ultimately to play havoc with their Marxist conscience.

Having accepted the teaching that capitalist concentration was the only road that would lead to the Socialist State they seemed bound to interpret this in practical politics as a duty to favor the big producer. They might be charitable and abstain from doing anything that would hasten the demise of the peasant, but in any way to delay it would mean to play truant from Socialist principles and cheat their own hopes of social revolution. Yet such a revolution might be equally in jeopardy if its point were to seem directed against the peasants, who had both numbers and control over food on their side. "We do not need the peasant for making a revolution," wrote Liebknecht to a friend, "but no revolution can hold out if the peasants are

against it."[34] What happened in France in 1848, when the peasants remained unmoved while the Paris workers were being shot down, and then voted solidly for the bourgeois dictatorship of Louis Napoleon, was a lesson not to be lightly forgotten. In Prussia the rising of 1848 was in the hands of intellectuals who ignored the peasants, and the peasants did not move. In Austria they did move, but their claims were met by the bourgeoisie with indifference and by the workers with hostility, and the two groups were crushed separately. Marx castigated the French peasants scornfully in *The Eighteenth Brumaire,* but the French revolutionaries had learned the lesson so well that the Manifesto of the Paris Commune, in 1871, zealously claimed the "land for the peasants."

The International and the German movement were dominated by Marx, however, and they had from the outset an outspokenly industrial character and class consciousness. If some of the leaders had no hope of winning the peasant, other more ardent spirits had no wish to win him, while both thought useless to try to convert him. The tactics generally accepted were to try to "neutralize" him. But the agricultural crises caused by the opening up of new food sources in eastern Europe and across the oceans had awakened the peasant to the need of protecting himself. Those politicians who had an ear to the ground and were not hampered by doctrine were quick to take up the cue. In the early nineties a number of peasant organizations of a conservative temper appeared in Hesse, in Westphalia, etc.; and similar groupings, the *Börengilde,* also in Belgium, in Holland and elsewhere. Even more telling were the results of various parliamentary elections. Everywhere Socialism had grown through parliamentary methods from small revolutionary groups into influential political bodies. Power was becoming a tangible goal. It was all the more tantalizing to find progress barred by the sullen countryside. "We have not got as yet a single Social-Democratic peasant," sighed a south-German delegate at the Halle Party Congress, in 1890. Dr. David maintained that the resolutions of the International had upset the peasant groups of southern Germany "among whom the democratic ideas of 1848 were then still alive"; "if their former attitude towards the Socialist movement had been one of indifference, it now became definitely hostile."[35] Only one peasant group, from the Belgian Ardennes, had so far taken an interest in the International, and it could hardly have been very welcome, for with simple peasant sense they told the International that "it will be difficult to build up Socialism on the soil of old Europe" and proposed a "general emigration to America." None of the Socialist prophets apparently felt in-

clined to lead such an exodus of the faithful. But by the early nineties some of them at least came to realize that the Ardennes peasants had spoken wisely, and that it meant either giving in or giving up.

With the nineties there began therefore in all the western countries a watering down of the Marxist tenets on agriculture. It was only natural that the ball should be set rolling by the French, who at Marseilles in 1892 and at Nantes in 1894 declared in favor of the smallholder, with the connivance of two of the most intransignet French Marxists—Jules Guesde and Lafargue, Marx's own son-in-law. The trend made its appearance likewise in the German, Danish, Belgian and Italian Socialist movements. It is doubtful whether it signified a change of heart, but it was plainly a change of front. Those responsible for these changes could not be expected to admit that Marx had been wrong, but they tried to make out that the peasant was different. The French reformists explained that his smallholding was nothing more than a tool, comparable to "the chisel of the engraver, the brush of the painter,"[36] only to be faced with an outcry against this attempt "to smuggle it(the private holding) in contraband, hidden among professional tools, into the domain of collectivism."[37] Jaurès was less clumsy when in reply to the criticism of Engels he contended that between large and small property there was a difference not merely of degree but also of kind: "the one was a form of capital, the other a form of labor."[38] Vandervelde translated this into a program by suggesting that "we must protect the peasant not as owner, but as tiller of the soil";[39] he did not explain how that subtle differentiation was to be measured, but that did not really matter.

For Socialism as a fighting movement the issue was not so much one of social theory as of political practice. In all the western countries the peasants formed an important if not a predominant part of the electorate. Marx had predicted their ultimate extinction and time might prove him a true prophet. But the peasants were obviously not meaning to go under without a fight and, like all belligerents, they were inclined to classify people as being either with them or against them. The old idea of "neutralizing" the peasant might have been in keeping with the picture which Socialists had had of him as the least stupid among the beasts of the farmyard. But neither the picture nor the policy any longer fitted the peasant who was entering the political arena stubbornly bent upon defending his birthright. In 1879, in his study, Guesde might write that "the soil could not belong to some people, to the detriment of others"; on the hustings, in 1894, as quoted by Charles Gide,

he had to declare that "the solution of the social question lies in the partition of the land." By the time the Party's national congress met at St. Etienne, in 1909, he had become almost the peasant's champion, defending his small property with the argument that "where ownership and labor are united in the same being, there can be no question of recovering for society, of expropriation—such expropriation would be sheer robbery, the very opposite of the aim of the Socialist Party, which is to make restitution." The first was the theoretical ideal, the other was practical politics.

The opportunist nature of these changes came out clearly in the prolonged and passionate debate on the agrarian program among the German Socialists of the nineties,[40] a debate which in truth has not yet subsided. Let it be noted that while some doubts may have arisen about the agrarian theory of Marx, there could be no doubts about the proper Marxist policy towards the peasants. In the third volume of *Capital* Engels had limited what Marxists might do for the peasants to tax relief, restriction of rent and protection against usury; for to do more, especially to give them the land of the large estates, would be to make them into a stronghold of bourgeois reaction and could not be envisaged, if at all, except as part of the general Socialist revolution which would control all economic policy and therefore ultimately also the evolution of peasant economy. The famous Erfurt program of 1891, the first to adopt the Marxist position in full, began with the orthodox statement that "the economic evolution of bourgeois society leads with the fatality of nature to the disappearance of the small enterprise," and then mentioned the peasantry among "the social middlelayers which are drowning." Kautsky himself, in his official commentary to the program, tried to calm the peasant's fears by explaining that no Socialist would dream of expropriating him. To which the reformists retorted that, for practical ends, it was not much use first telling the peasant that he was doomed and then trying to comfort him with "the promise of a better life in the Socialist after-world."[41] Like his fellow-sufferer, the proletarian, he wanted something immediate and tangible whereby to improve his lot on earth. At Frankfurt in 1894 the eloquent pleading of two southern Socialists, Vollmar and Schönlack, reinforced by skillful use of statistical evidence on the persistence and productivity of smallholdings,[42] was indeed successful in securing approval for a policy which should protect the peasant "as a taxpayer, as a debtor, and as a producer." But though, as Dr. David confessed, the Conference had merely listened to "the lessons and needs of political propaganda on the land," that compromise roused a storm of

protest from the more orthodox leaders as well as among the bulk of the rank and file. "There is only one obvious reason for this serious political relapse," commented Kautsky, "and that is regard for the peasants. We have not yet captured them, but they have already captured us."[43] *"Bauernfängerei,"* grumbled the Socialist-in-the-street. "The ensnaring of the peasant in the literal sense of the word is becoming the fashion on the Continent," jeered Engels in a letter to Sorge, an American friend. He was to receive early satisfaction. The very next Party congress, at Breslau in 1895, rejected by a large majority the report in which the resolutions of the previous year were given a moderate practical basis. The great struggle for the reform of the Socialist agrarian program had thus ended in fiasco.

That end was highly significant. The agrarian debate had been an episode in the general reformist movement, and it must be remembered that it had been just as hard to get the Party to promise the workers any improvement of their lot before the advent of collectivism. Yet the point is precisely in the difference, for officially German Socialism ended by refusing to do for the peasant what it agreed to do for the worker. It could justly claim, of course, that between worker and peasant there was one distinction which made all the difference. The trouble with the peasant was that his way of holding and working the land was blasphemy to Marxism. Engels made no attempt to hide the satisfaction with which he noted, in the third volume of *Capital,* that "fortunately" there was left across the seas enough virgin land "to ruin all the large European landlords and the small ones as well." "We have no use in the Party," he roundly declared, "for the peasant who expects from us the perpetuation of his dwarf property."[44] Vandervelde, writing in 1898, supported him, declaring that the Biblical homestead could no longer be realized—"It would be as easy to replace the Code Napolean by the Tables of Moses." The utmost they might do would be to give the peasant a "longer period in which to think things over on his puny holdings"; though he wisely refrained from defining where the permissible "prolongation" ended and the reactionary "perpetuation" began. At any rate Engels' standpoint no doubt reflected the general sense of the movement. German Socialism wanted to remain a party of the proletariat; they had in no way any feeling of fellowship with the peasant. They misunderstood and mistrusted everything rural and believed that the backward countryside would be a drag rather than a help on the triumphant Socialist march. In reviewing Dr. David's famous book on *Socialism and Agriculture* Kautsky insisted that "our

policy must favor the peasant as little as the Junker,"[45] and there is no doubt that at that time he was speaking the mind of the Party.

The hostility which the countryside displayed in return probably hardened that sentiment in the heart of the Party, but it prompted a change in its outward attitude. No Socialist leader could remain indifferent to the fact that till the end of the nineteenth century not a single rural constituency had sent a Socialist to the Reichstag. Kautsky felt himself called upon to show a way out of that political impasse, to which he had greatly contributed, and later he attempted to place the issue on a basis that would remain orthodox while being practical.[46] He argued that workers and peasants had some interests that were akin and others that were opposed to each other. The latter made a joint party impracticable, but the first made political co-operation desirable. "The community of interests may at times weigh heavier than the opposition of interests and favor the working together of peasants and proletarians. But no matter how often they may be fighting the same battle, as a rule they will have to march separately, and the ally of today may become the opponent of tomorrow." This was plausible enough as a philosophical summing-up of the case, but of little use for practical politics. The argument really postulated the organization of the peasantry in separate political bodies and consequently the abandonment of all hope of Socialist progress among them. Kautsky could hardly have meant that; at any rate he did not say it, nor would even those who sympathized with his theoretical standpoint have listened to him. Instead, the Socialist members of the Reichstag, especially those representing southern constituencies, simply ignored the Party's solemn decisions and supported, at times even initiated, reforms in favor of the peasantry. On their side the stern theoreticians of the Party shut their eyes to the heretical conduct of the parliamentarians and went on proclaiming the true doctrine. It was a perfect case of agreeing to differ. In that way the Socialists found more ready "access to the countryside, but only by leaving Socialism at home."[47] On the part of the Marxists it was a family truce, to last out the sowing of the revolutionary seed; a willingness, as Kautsky had hinted, to take the peasant for ally during the battle royal with capitalism. But what thereafter? Who would reap the fruits of victory? In his *Two Tactics for Social-Democracy*[48] Lenin bluntly drew the true conclusion of the chain of reasoning in which Kautsky had indulged six years earlier. After the victory, he wrote, "then it would be ridiculous to speak of the unity of will of the

proletariat and of the peasantry, of democratic rule. . . . Then we shall have to think of the Socialist, of the proletarian dictatorship."

Chapter 4

The Populist Reaction[49]

THE COURSE of the agrarian debate among western socialists clearly showed that whatever changes were made in the stiff Marxist program were dictated by opportunist reasons. They were mere bones, grudgingly thrown by the self-centered righteous town-clan to the scowling countryside. Here, as later again in the Russian Revolution, history was repeating itself. The French Revolution had been celebrated for having battered down the feudal servitudes which still survived on the land, but it had done so as part of its general attack against aristocratic privilege and autocracy, not from any particular attachment to the peasants. The needs of the moment had urged its leaders to conciliate the peasants, and that had been the more readily done as the same action hit the aristocratic *émigrés*; just as the confiscation of the latter's land had been designed to impoverish them and fill the revolutionary coffer, not to lift up the peasants, who were made to pay well for what they got. In short, the agrarian policy of the French Revolution had been not so much a considered social reform as a medley of tactical political moves.[50]

That is equally true, taking the movement as a whole, of the agrarian reforms accepted and supported by western Socialists after the nineties, as indeed of Soviet policy in its earlier phase. Reformers or pure Marxists were moved much more by political needs than by scientific arguments, and even less by any understanding or sympathy for the countryside. The Communist Manifesto had lumped the peasant together with handicraftsmen and small traders, etc., in the "petty bourgeoisie" as an unstable and reactionary class and never thought of allotting him a place of his own in the revolutionary procession. If one considers not only *Capital* but his whole scientific and political activity, nowhere will one find signs that Marx had seriously studied the actual state of the peasants in any one land.[51] His way had been to formulate a general theory and simply sweep them into it, never considering them as a subject fitted for a special plan of reform. It was a sentence without trial. All his

life, not only as an economist, but also as a townsman and revolutionary, Marx was filled with undisguised contempt for the peasant. In *The Eighteenth Brumaire* he explained that the peasants formed a class in so far as their economic organization and in their life they differed from both the bourgeois and the proletariat, and were antagonistic to them; but politically they lacked the unity of a class, being rather an agglomeration of individuals, which he compared to a sack of potatoes. He even found it in him to praise capitalism for having rescued "a considerable part of the population from the idiocy of rural life."[52] This reflects a prejudice still widely prevalent among western Socialists. In practice they had to temper it and compromise wherever the peasants persisted in sufficient numbers to count as a political factor; and in each country, as was natural, the revisionist current flowed strongest from the regions where agriculture on a small scale predominated. What other attitude, for instance, could the south German Socialists have adopted? To them the issue was never clouded: it was either a modified Socialism with the peasants or without the peasants no Socialism at all. In so far as they wanted Socialism they had to temper their Marxism.

If that issue was clear enough in Germany and in France, it was bound to be glaring in the peasant countries of eastern Europe. As one traveled eastwards across the Continent factories became scarcer while farms multiplied, until agriculture spread itself out almost without rival on the vast plains of Russia.[53] The revolt against Marxism followed exactly this variation in economic structure. It traveled eastwards in ever widening eddies until it struck the shores of Russia; there it encountered intense local currents and the returning tide came back transformed out of all recognition as Populism, and in that guise overflowed into the neighboring peasant countries. Marxism and Populism are so tartly dissimilar that any suggestion of their being in any way related must appear exceedingly strained. Yet the connection has been real enough. Not only has the second taken some of its theory from the first, but above all, as we shall see, Populism was carried forward on the high wave of radical sentiment stirred up by Marxist Socialism. And when it finally took political shape in the Peasant movement it was no small degree as a reaction against the agrarian plans of Marxism. One could sum up that chapter of social history in the paradox that it was Marxism which already many years ago had fouled the progress of the Marxist experiment attempted and preached by the Bolsheviks.

Eastern Europe differed from the West economically in that it was largerly agrarian, a region of peasant subsistence farm-

ing, with little industry and most of it artificially fostered. It differed still more socially: historical circumstances had left it a backwater of feudal relations, with "democratic" political institutions, where they existed, even more artificially planted than its industries.[54] The analysis and prognosis of "scientific" Socialism therefore did not seem to fit such conditions at all, and the dilemma which troubled western Socialists was merely a source of confusion in the East. Lenin, as will be seen, became increasingly conscious of this and shaped his views and actions accordingly, though merely to make them serve all the better his determined pursuit of the proletarian revolution. Indeed, his notes for the four lectures given in Paris in 1903 on *Marxist Views on the Agrarian Question in Europe and Russia* (published in the nineteenth volume of his collected materials) showed an almost surprising attachment to expediency; he used the occasion to abuse the Social-Democrat Y. M. Steklov (still writing on agrarian questions as a Communist in the early thirties), whose views were close to those of the Social Revolutionaries, for being too doctrinaire and paying insufficient attention to Russian conditions. A general appeal, he insisted, equally applicable to other countries, would not mean enough to rouse the Russian peasantry. In Russia and some other eastern and Asiatic countries a revolution seemed more inevitable and imminent than in the West, but also it could be only a bourgeois-democratic revolution, needing support from the peasants, for which a price had to be paid. For eastern Marxists the trouble was that other groups of revolutionaries appealing for peasant support also described themselves as socialists, and the antifeudal revolution they had in mind as the gate to socialism. Much of the theoretical work of the earlier Russian Marxists was devoted to disproving that claim, particularly Lenin's classic *Development of Capitalism in Russia*; but while seeking to show that modern social differentiation had penetrated as far as the village, at the same time, writing in 1907, he chastised those Marxists who "while criticizing the *narodnik* theory overlook its historically real and historically legitimate content in the struggle against serfdom."[55]

Because of his concentration upon the implications of any eastern revolution Lenin's arguments are apt to vary and read more like tactical instructions for the wavering political front, partly no doubt because they are scattered through his writings over the years. Perhaps a more concentrated analysis of the problem of how to relate Marxism to backward peasant societies was that of another eastern Marxist, the Rumanian Dobrogeanu-Gherea, but while Gherea's analysis was more consis-

tent, or because of this, it proved much less effective than Lenin's as a program of action.

Gherea was writing while the revisionist wrangle in the West was at its sharpest but, unlike Lenin, he did not take sides in it, perhaps for the good reason that he considered it to have no meaning for the eastern peasant countries. In the East it was not a question of capitalist large farming against petty bourgeois peasant farming. As Gherea pointed out, in those countries the poverty-stricken, semi-servile peasant was in no way a true peasant farmer, and the latifundiary estate owner was not a large-scale farmer. The bulk of the large estates were tilled for the benefit of the absentee owners by the peasants, generally with the latter's animals and ploughs and often also with their seed.[56] If at that time *latifundia* still tended to increase that was not through any economic superiority but because the landed class could exploit the prevailing social and political conditions, with all their abuses. The impact of capitalism upon backward agrarian countries had thus produced a hybrid system—this was Gherea's central theme—economically and socially, a mixture of the worst in old and new which he described in the title of his classic work as *Neo-Serfdom*.[57] "The organization of production is in good part servile and feudal," though now disguised in contractual forms, which together with inadequate holdings left the peasants dependent on the landowners.[58]

Gherea's correct analysis of eastern conditions led him into an ambiguous position in the face of the authentic Marxian theory. He was all for giving the peasants opportunity and means really to become small farmers, as this would be more efficient than *latifundia*. Moreover, if semi-servile conditions were abolished it would probably force the large owners to part with some of their land to the peasants (or if need be they should be made to do so), and on the rest to adopt modern methods of capitalist farming. Both changes would help to introduce capitalist relations on the land. Gherea admitted that this was likely to produce an agricultural proletariat, but they could be protected as such and in any case would be better off than the servile peasants. He also granted that such measures would not solve the peasant problem altogether, but they would open the way to increased productivity and capitalist organization in agriculture.[59] All this was an advance on orthodox Marxism, both in Gherea's awareness of how important the peasant question was for Marxism and in his effort to relate Socialism to the realities of the eastern countries. He tried to do justice to the peasants in arguing that under free conditions they could be better farmers than the large owners; and while

aware that many would inevitably become agricultural proletarians, he showed sympathy for the peasants and did not regard their fate, as Lenin did, merely as providing one more useful weapon in the class struggle. But that was as far as Gherea could go. On the fundamental issues of the eastern situation he remained as good a Marxist as any, believing in the need for industrial capitalist development. "A country eminently agricultural," he said, "is a country eminently poor and socially and economically backward."[60] He demonstrated with insight and sympathy for the peasants the pernicious effects which followed from superimposing western capitalism upon simple peasant societies, but he had no wish to preserve such societies and accepted those effects as an inevitable stage in the process of economic evolution. For the agrarian ideals of the Populists he therefore had no use at all.

Populism was essentially an agrarian movement; in Europe it was also a peculiarly Russian movement. The other countries of eastern Europe were still struggling to secure their national independence and in the earlier period their peasant peoples were not yet ready to face the problems of their internal social independence. Russia, however, was passing in the first half of the nineteenth century through a process of intense and critical self-examination. Under the stimulus of French Utopian socialism (and perhaps the influence of French *émigrés* who acquainted them with the reforming ideas of the encyclopedists and others) Russian intellectuals felt deeply the misery in which serfdom and oligarchy had steeped the mass of their people. This humanitarian interest in the *muzhik* met in a natural confluence with the spirit of national messianism stirred up by the wars with Napoleon. As the only Continental country to have been able to resist him, Russia felt a new pride in herself, and the slavish imitation of the West which had marked the "Petersburg" period turned into an equally uncritical worship of the Russian past. The good old ways, naturally, had survived best among the mass of the people, and so the main trait of the new Slavophil current was the interest taken in the traditional ways and institutions of the peasants.

Of these institutions none seemed more typical or venerable or was more widespread than the peasant commune, the *mir* or *obshchina*.[61] The Slavophils, looking upon the *mir* as a vessel by means of which religion and a Christian way of life without greed or envy had been kept undefiled, made of it an object of almost mystic veneration on ethnic and ethical grounds. From the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, however, the *mir* acquired a fresh and tremendous significance for social reasons. "The Slav commune began to be appreci-

ated," asserted Herzen, "when Socialism began to spread." Its fervent Russian adepts now began to see in the *mir* also the basis for an ideal socialistic commonwealth. Some of them, like Herzen, went even further. Disappointed with the failure of 1848, and with western Liberalism in general, they looked upon the *mir* as a seed which a revolutionary providence had nursed on Russian soil to generate from it in good time a socialist world. Perhaps Herzen himself fathered the idea: in a letter to Michelet, in 1851, he expressed his conviction that Russia's isolation from Europe had been her salvation, as it had protected the *obshchina* from the withering currents of bourgeois capitalism.[62]

Thus a chain of high waves of popular sentiment—humanism, nationalism, Socialism—had worked together to create in Russia a fervid interest in the people and in the peasant commune. Radical reformers and reactionary Slavophils were united in their faith in the *mir*. If Slavophils like Khomyakov wanted to save Russia from the godlessness of the West, Herzen and his friends wanted to save her from western "bourgeois" misery. Both despised Western civilization and the political economy of the West, one side attacking it in the name of a "chimerical past and the other in the name of an utopian future."[63] It was into that potent sentimental bias that the new times now injected the dynamic force of Marxist Socialism. The vaguer mental stirrings caused by the French Socialism of the thirties and forties were given more definite shape by German Socialism after 1848; Lassalle, Marx and Engels profoundly influenced the Russian radicals, especially those who had the opportunity of seeing and studying the Socialist movement abroad. The rapid progress of western Socialism between 1863-67, the agitation of Lassalle, the formation of the International, the Paris Commune—all these helped to instill a feverish spirit into Russian radicalism.

The main effect, however, was to change not merely the temper but the whole position of the revolutionary movement. Until the beginning of the eighties the Russian intellectual radicals had assumed that the peasants must be the instrument of any Russian revolution, but at that time Marxism was introduced among them and many found it more acceptable than Populism, with its denial of industrial progress, and more promising as a revolutionary creed. In 1883 Plekhanov founded the first Marxist group and proclaimed the proletariat as the true spearhead of the revolutionary movement; and Lenin's maiden work, *On the Development of Capitalism in Russia,* set out to prove that like the West she was moving along the road of bourgeois capitalism to the proletarian revolution. The

earlier socialists had always envisaged an agrarian and "national" socialism for Russia; as fast, therefore, and as strongly as the new revolutionary inspiration developed, difficulties began to crop up which made it doubtful whether Marxism could be grafted on to Russia. At every essential point Marxist theory and practice were found to conflict with the old and fond beliefs of the Russian revolutionaries, as well as with the strategy they had worked out from their experience. First in the way stood the Marxist historical analysis: it insisted on the determinism of economic evolution and postulated a phase of industrial development and capitalist concentration of production as the inevitable prelude to a Socialist society. Certain reservations had been allowed by Marx and Engels themselves. The third volume of *Capital* conceded that historical or local conditions might to some extent modify the evolutionary process. More directly applicable to Russia was another remark of Marx's that the chief condition for the economic survival of the peasant was that "the rural population should have a great numerical superiority, that is that the capitalist system of production . . . should be only relatively developed";[64] though he could have meant by this only a temporary, delaying survival, not a permanent one. But well before the appearance of that posthumous volume Marx was on several occasions towards the end of his life drawn directly into the Marxist-Populist controversy which was stirring in Russia. A little earlier, in 1874, Engels had conceded that under favorable conditions the Russian *mir* might lead to higher social forms, "avoiding the intermediate state of individualized bourgeois property"; and in a letter written in 1877 Marx also vaguely granted that Russia had the finest chance of any in history of avoiding "the ups-and-downs of the capitalist order." The most definite was the last of these pronouncements, in the Preface to the Russian edition of 1882 of the Communist Manifesto, signed jointly by Marx and Engels.[65] First the issue was formulated quite clearly: "Can the Russian village commune, which is already an extremely corrupt form of the original communal ownership of land, pass over direct to a higher, Communist form of ownership, or must it first of all go through the process of liquidation familiar to us in the historical evolution of the West?" The answer seemed to say that such a direct elevation was possible, but on one important condition: "If the Russian revolution should become the signal for a workers' revolution in the West, so that the two would complement each other, then the present Russian system of communal ownership could serve as the starting-point for a Communist development."[66]

By far the most instructive of these statements, however,

was made by Marx in a letter to Vera Zasulich, both because it was made in answer to a direct and plain question from a devoted but anxious follower, and because Marx obviously fretted long over his reply. Though written in 1881 the letter was not made public till 1924,[67] but it was only with the publication of the detailed material by Ryazanov a few years later that it was seen what great pains Marx had taken over it.[68] He changed and revised it many times, so that while the actual letter runs to some forty lines, the drafts published by Ryazanov run to more than nine hundred lines. Vera Zasulich had written from Geneva to ask Marx what he thought of the *future* of the *mir*, "a question of life and death" for Russian Socialists: for either they must devote all their energy to advancing the *mir*, or if it was an "archaic form," marked as many Russian Marxists said for deserved extinction, Socialists would have to limit their activities to working among the urban workers. Marx made a real effort to find the right answer. Being "archaic" gave the Russian *mir* a great advantage over all similar archaic forms for two reasons: it was the only communal form that had maintained itself in Europe on a wide national scale; and as the land in the hands of the Russian peasantry had never been their private property, the "historic fatality" of the accumulation of private capital experienced in western Europe did not apply to them. The translation of the *mir* into collective units of production might be easily achieved simply by replacing the administrative institution of the *volost*, which "links a fair number of villages together," with a "peasant assembly elected by the commune itself and serving as the economic and administrative organ of their interests." At the same time Marx insisted that the isolation of the Russian commune, a "localized microcosm," without any relation to the life of other communes, made it incapable of any historic initiative. That isolation could be broken only by a general revolution—which obviously could not be organized by the peasants—provided that it came in time and "concentrated all its strength on securing the free rise of the village commune." Then the *mir* could soon become "an element of regeneration for Russian society and an element of superiority over the countries enslaved to the capitalist regime."

All this is highly illuminating, both as to Marx's way of thinking and to the dilemma of the Russian Marxists. It seems that Marx grew somewhat impatient with his too-orthodox disciples who refused to think that Russia could achieve Socialism without first passing through a capitalist stage, while at the same time, in spite of their unorthodox economic views, he felt some sympathy for the *narodniki* who, after all, had been

the first to set themselves the task of preparing a general social revolution. In theory Marx conceded that through certain reforms the *mir* might be capable of evolving into a Socialistic system, and this was close to the Populist view; at the same time he made its "salvation" dependent on a timely revolution which could not be of the peasants' making. The actual letter therefore was short and much more oracular. After referring to the passages in *Capital* which made it clear that its analysis was based on western experience, the letter said: "The analysis given in my *Capital* offers, therefore, no ground either for or against the survival of the village commune; however, the special study I have made of it and the material I got from original sources convince me that the commune is the main element of social regeneration in Russia, but that if it is to be that, one must first do away with the injurious conditions which press upon it from all sides and then secure for it normal conditions for spontaneous development." The question of Vera Zasulich had put the decision up to the master; Marx's answer in effect left the Russian revolutionaries to decide for themselves where their efforts should lie. The conclusion which Vera Zasulich herself apparently drew from the correspondence almost looked as if she gave up all hope that Russia could achieve her own Socialist revolution, a revolution which could not come without the peasants and could not be for the peasants. In a passage written soon after, she said that the gradual liquidation of the *mir* was inevitable and that capitalism had to appear also in Russia, but that the Socialist revolution in the West could put an end to capitalism in the East as well, "and then the remnants of the institution of communal ownership would render a great service to Russia."[69]

Marx and Engels it would seem admired the *mir*, in which together with other western writers they wrongly saw a communist, if somewhat decayed, institution.[70] In any case, the tenor of those scattered pronouncements suggested either that they were belatedly puzzled by the peasant phenomenon or that they were making a valiant effort to ease the prospects of their Russian disciples. For their several statements, especially that in the Preface to the Russian edition of the Communist Manifesto—and this was the only one of a public nature—not only modified but almost abandoned the revolutionary analysis of the Manifesto. At the same time all these statements merely confused the issue still more and probably were never meant to come down firmly on one side or the other. It is important to note at this point that Marx and Engels made concessions only on the middle-term of their analysis, allowing that the intermediate evolution might be different in Russia, but none

at all on its final conclusion, that small-scale production was a blight on the Socialist ideal. And this, after all, was the crux of the peasant problem.

At that stage the question whether Russia would evolve economically and socially like the West was splitting the Russian intelligentsia into two passionate camps. The Marxists and the Liberals were bound to reply affirmatively, the Slavophils and the Populists denied it. At the time the Populist view was sweeping the country, influencing even the economic schools at the universities,[71] and the key to all their hopes and beliefs was the *mir*. They held, as we have shown, that as she had been fortunate to have preserved the village commune, Russia could evolve from it a more perfect form of communism without having first to pass through an intermediate phase of industrial capitalism and suffer her masses to become "wage-slaves." Nor indeed could Russia become effectively industrialized—a view put forward by Chernyshevsky already in the fifties and later developed by Lavrov, Vorontsov, and others.[72] They pointed out that whatever industry existed was artificially created; it was only by receiving all kinds of privileges that it could keep alive at all, while side by side with it the small producer, and especially the *artel*,[73] continued to exist. As Russia had neither capital nor a middle class of her own, western capitalism could infiltrate but slowly. There was thus a chance of furthering a system of socialized production which would aim at the welfare of its workers, in the manner of the *artel*, and not solely at its own indefinite expansion. Capitalism, then, was not indispensable to Russia, nor indeed was it possible there. Capitalism would inevitably destroy the autonomous peasant homesteads. But such an unskilled recruit to capitalism as Russia could have no hope of conquering foreign markets: Russian industry was and would remain altogether dependent on the home market, so that in Russia large-scale industry would be a capitalist Frankenstein. In the measure in which it grew it would reduce the peasant's purchasing power and so dry up its only source of life.

Lenin attacked this argument in the eighth chapter of *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, insisting the underconsumption was the result of backward conditions under the Tsarist regime and not of any innate trait of capitalism; but on one curious occasion Marx himself would seem to have confirmed the Populist view, though indirectly and hesitantly. During the polemic caused in Russia by the first volume of *Capital*, Mikhailovsky argued that if Marx's theory of economic determinism was correct, then all Russian Marxists ought to do everything in their power to further the division of labor,

the expropriation of the peasants, and so on. This seemed a fair deduction, but Marx did not like it. He wrote an answer which, however, he never sent and which was not published till 1888, after his death. In that missive Marx explained that his chapter on the concentration of capital was based on the history of western Europe. Do its arguments apply to Russia? Only thus, that "*if* Russia tries to become a capitalist nation, after the example of western Europe, *and during the last ten years she has taken much trouble in that direction,* she will not succeed without first transforming a good many of her peasants into proletarians. . . . That is all."[74] But that was exactly what the Populists were contending; little wonder that Marx refrained from sending the reply, however anxious he may have been to assist his hard-pressed Russian disciples. Yet even this message could not have saved them, for though it allowed them to surrender the point that Russia *must* pass through the capitalist phase, it did not tell them whether she *ought* to pass through it for the sake of economic and social progress. If Russia wanted to develop industrially she, like the western nations, would have to pass through the capitalist purgatory; but if she did not want it, could she avoid it and yet reach the Socialist heaven? That was the real point of Mikhailovsky's criticism, and he mercilessly drove it home not with abstract theory but with Russia's vital practical question: What are you going to do with the peasant?

Here was the real dividing line between Marxists and Populists. What seemed a purely theoretical dispute covered in truth an irreconcilable difference on the chief practical end of the social revolution desired by all. Marx and Engels, as we have seen, had conceded that the *obshchina* might be a means towards Socialistic evolution, but never that it could be an end in itself, which is really what the Populists had at heart. The Marxists were interested in production, the eastern reformers were interested in the producers. It is significant that what in the West is commonly known as the Land question, in the East has always been spoken of as the Peasant question. For the sake of scientific production the Marxists accepted with equanimity, if not actually with eagerness, the destruction of the peasantry as a class. But in eastern Europe the whole social problem centered on the peasants, who had the greatest needs and the greatest numbers; a revolutionary movement which left them out of account would have neither hope nor scope. Moreover, had not the Russian peasant, in his village commune, practiced all along what Socialism was preaching? For a while the revolutionists thought that he would only need to have his eyes opened to realize that he had been "speaking prose" all the

time; the peasant had only to be freed from his economic and political shackles and socialism would simply rise to the surface in Russia. This belief produced the amazing episode of the evangelistic "going among the people" of thousands of young men and women, mainly students. They were bent as much upon cleansing their own souls of the pollution of "civilization" through contact with the simple peasant, as upon helping him to find his own. The result was a profound disappointment. The propagandists soon discovered that they and the people were not speaking the same language. As one of them, Zhelyabov, confessed, "the short period of our stay among the people revealed to us all that was doctrinaire and 'literary' in our aspirations; on the other hand it taught us that there are in the consciousness of the people many elements which one must take into account and preserve."[75]

That experience had a lasting effect upon the Russian movement, and effect which came to light in the credo of the reconstructed revolutionary group *Land and Liberty*. In the first issue of their journal they declared that "we are convinced that the only forms of culture with a historic future are those which express the spirit and aspirations of the popular masses. We do not believe in fostering among the people by propaganda ideals differing from those which have formed among them throughout the past." The part of the revolutionary leader was merely to organize the masses for the speedier fulfilment of their needs and desires. With these arguments the bulk of the Russian Socialists came to jettison the alien doctrine of economic determinism, of the inevitable capitalistic phase, and so on. They had lost interest in western developments that were not applicable to Russia and instead took up the ideas and ideals which were alive among their own people. Their practical program naturally followed the change in outlook. The peasants liked the *mir* because it satisfied an innate feeling for equality; they wanted more land; they objected to the land tax, believing that taxes should be levied on the results of human labor, and not on the God-given soil. All these ideals will be found again among the chief claims of the Russian Populists. They demanded all the land for the peasants; the suppression of taxes; the development of communal land and the re-establishment of the autonomy of the communes.[76] For the rest, the notion of the class war appealed but little to some of the revolutionaries and moved the peasants not at all. Their oppressors were individual landlords and officials, deriving the power they abused from the political rather than from the economic system. Much of the social mysticism of the Russian revolutionaries is explained by these conditions. For many of them the revolution

was not merely a means for improving the lot of the peasant class, or even of the working class at large, but for the social and moral regeneration of the whole Russian people.[77]

The discord with Marxism appeared still more clearly in those points on which the eastern socialists accepted the standpoint of Marx. The one Marxist position which then seemed impregnable was the claim that economic progress was bound up with large-scale production. None of the early Populists dreamed of contesting that, but while accepting the law they rejected the interpretation. Their way to better production was not by way of capitalist concentration but again by way of the *mir*. A good subject for studying the action and reaction of the Marxist formula is to be found in a leading Serbian Socialist, Svetozar Marković. Like most eastern Socialists Marković was intellectually altogether under the sway of German thinkers, especially of Marx, and as such he implicitly accepted Marx's agrarian theory. But Marković had also been educated in Russia, where he inevitably fell under the congenial influence of the Russian socialists, above all of Chernyshevsky. Here the two currents, therefore, met in one and the same person, and the resulting compound was seen in the plea made by Marković in 1875: "We must find means," he said, "to prevent the creation of a proletariat, and at the same time to get land concentrated as the science of agriculture demands."[78] One can almost see the struggle going on in the man's heart: as a Socialist he dared not contest the Marxist doctrine perched high on its impressive scientific stilts, while as a reformer in a peasant land he could not bring himself to accept the hard implications of that doctrine.[79] His way out of the dilemma was the *mir*. The southern Slavs did not know the *mir*, but they had the family community, the *zadruga*, and Marković wanted it to be expanded into a village community. What they hoped from it was plainly explained by Nicolas-on: "We must build up a scientific agriculture and a modern industry on the *mir*, and at the same time so change it that it shall become a suitable means for transforming the capitalist form of great industry into a social form."[80] They felt the more justified in that hope because their way seemed to meet many of the wishes or complaints of western Socialists. The *artel* and the *mir* were not unlike rough casts of the guilds of production to which many western Socialists aspired; their combination would also meet the typical Marxist complaint that capitalism by separating countryside and town had deprived agriculture of its "natural manure."

It would therefore appear that the existence in their coun-

tries of communal forms of landholding enabled eastern Socialists to try to escape the unbearable implications of the Marxist doctrine and program. They sat humbly at the feet of Marx when it was a matter of theory, but when it came to applying it they clung to the belief that the peculiar conditions prevailing in Russia and the southern Slav countries placed them in a category of their own.[81] An important question for this argument is whether those Socialists would not have rebelled just the same had *mir* and *zadruga* been unknown to them. On the strength of western experience alone one would be entitled to answer that in truth it had been the all-pervading presence of the peasant, as in France and southern Germany, which had been the decisive factor, and that the communal element was merely an added and comforting ground for revolt. We have already noted the significant parallelism between population and doctrine: the more numerous the peasants the greater the defection from the Marxist school: in the West many peasants and Revisionism, in the East mostly peasants and, as a consequence, Populism. More definite proof is supplied, however, by the extension of Populist influence. Its outlook and claims penetrated not only into Serbia but also into Bulgaria, though the Bulgarians had neither *mir* nor *zadruga*; they too, however, were Slavs and since their national revival had been greatly under Russian intellectual influence. Rumania, however, provides a conclusive case. She had no active communal institutions,[82] for political-geographical reasons she was greatly suspicious of everything Slav; and her new culture had been wholly borrowed from the West. Yet the Populist spirit crossed her frontiers also and engendered a powerful social and intellectual current, openly directed against Marxist doctrine and policy.

These eastern countries varied a great deal in population and history, in outlook and structure; the only factor common to them all was their peasant-agrarian character. The consequence for the social reformer was pointed out by the leading theoretician of the Rumanian Populists, Constantin Stere: "The burning social problem which the West has to face as a result of capitalist development and the industrialization of modern production does not yet confront our society, or confronts it in a totally different form—namely, as a *peasant* question, in all its extent and variety, and not as a proletarian question, as in the West." And further on, in an outburst which brought out strongly all that was incompatible between Marxism and agrarian reformism: "The attempt to subject the vital interests of a nation to the claims of a formula, now degenerated into a mystic dogma—in disregard of the social character of the great

bulk of her people, in disregard of the urgent and undeniable needs of the historic moment—such an attempt is not only absurd but also immoral, and against it we have emphatically asserted the Populist standpoint." That Populist conception "is fully summed up in the line of conduct imposed by the duty of subordinating every attempt at reconstruction, and even all public activity, to the real and definite interests of *our* people," taking the people in those circumstances in which they happened to find themselves. Not that socialism was to be barred from agrarian countries. But in such countries and from this point of view "socialism is legitimate only as a factor in Populism." Every Socialist "must be a Populist, and *cannot* be a Socialist *except through* being a Populist. But not every Populist need also be a Socialist."[83]

The practical consequences of that view led fatally to a divorce from the Marxist view of society. In a country like Rumania, said Stere, in which the peasants then formed 94 per cent of the taxpayers, political progress had no meaning unless it tended toward a rural democracy; and this ideal meant in turn that "our economic evolution, as the whole structure of our State, will necessarily have to retain its specific peasant character. Hence economic progress must tend above all to organize the nation's economic life on peasant foundations: a vigorous peasantry, owning the land it tills and uniting through a comprehensive co-operative system all the virtues of smallholdings with all the technical advantages which to-day are accessible only to large owners." That was the only road which a would-be practical reformer could tread in eastern Europe. Those who set out upon it did not, however, do so simply from a sense of fatal necessity. Far from it. The eastern Populists were convinced that theirs was the better and more hopeful of the two worlds.[84] It was a trait which they had taken over from the Slavophils; but in truth it had been western social philosophy, with its criticism of industrial civilization and its clamor for a new life, that had supplied them with the weapons wherewith to fight westernism. Marx's castigation of western society confirmed the self-confidence of the eastern revolutionaries, while the failures of 1848 and 1870 had the same effect by disappointing their hopes for a change. The achievements of western Liberalism seemed to them superficial. The western worker enjoyed little more than the Barmecide feast of political freedom, whereas the Populist ideal meant to give the eastern peoples true freedom through economic independence.[85]

The Populist outlook fed on a strong sentimental undercurrent, on the emotional piety and rustic ties which still attached

to the soil the sons and grandsons of peasants. The East also had an innate dislike, well illustrated in Tolstoy's writings, of state paternalism as being as destructive as urban devices for the soul of the individual. To such men there was something inherently repugnant in the hard materialism of Marxist speculation. The Russians, above all, could not long suppress the idealist streak which permeated all their outlook. The growth of revisionism went hand in hand with a return to philosophic idealism, each to some extent furthering the other; and as the change progressed under Populist influence, it was natural that the new idealism should, like the old, have a rural bias, however far apart the two may have been in their points of departure. In 1847 the Slavophil writer, Khomyakov, had divided the nations of the earth into "farmers" and "conquerors," having in mind their psychological characteristics rather than their economic organization.[86] In a less extreme form the same bias made the Populist writer signing himself "W.W." say thirty years later that "the man who has abandoned husbandry is a fallen man. He leaves the moral and material orbit of the village community and enters upon a new road on which he no longer needs solidarity and justice, on which he can advance more quickly by shrewdness and tricks." From such views it was easy to pass to the proposal of the famous revolutionary manifesto of 1861, *To the Young Generation,* that the urban bourgeoisie should be obliterated by giving each citizen a parcel of land.[87]

A bold profession of peasantist faith! The West had embarked headlong upon an industrial civilization, but that had brought the masses only misery at home and conflict beyond the frontiers. The only remedy offered by Marxism was to intensify the evil until it be consumed in its own fires. But what did that mean unless continued misery for the present, and for the future no more than a hope based on a dogma? Had the East no possible better destiny than to copy that so-called civilization and suffer all its withering effects? To begin with, it was doubtful whether the East had the means to imitate the western experiment; and even if it had, what would success bring to make up for the proletarianization of its self-reliant tillers of the soil? The peasants were indeed poor, but even so they had a more tolerable and dignified existence than the industrial wage-slaves, and one upon which, with more land and more liberty, they could build up a true socialist society. Let the peasant, therefore, continue to plough his land, give him more freedom and education, and his would be a simple yet withal strong and full life to make all the world envious.

Chapter 5

Program for Revolution

"WHEN SOCIETY has discovered the natural law which regulates its movement," wrote Marx in the preface to his *Critique of Political Economy,* it can "at least shorten and lessen the birth-pangs." This was the justification for revolution, and for proletarian revolution in particular; it was not a wilful pursuit of violent change, but simply a matter of moving along with the inexorable laws of social nature. Eastern Marxist and Populists were divided essentially on two main issues. One was an issue of economic theory and program: it boiled down to the question whether Socialism had to be reached through an industrial capitalist evolution or could be reached through the evolution of peasant property and farming. The other, a more urgent concomitant, was an issue of revolutionary strategy: whether the peasants had a part of their own to play in the revolution and its aftermath. Later Russian Social-Democrats looked askance at the tactical retreat which Marx and Engels had allowed themselves on the first issue in the preface to the Russian edition of the Communist Manifesto. Unsubstantial though it really was, it deprived them in effect on this central issue of any point of vantage against the Populists, and therefore in time they returned to the purer pattern of the Manifesto. But the particular and central difference between Russian Populists and Marxists was their differing estimates of the *obshchina.* The Marxists saw in it merely a backward economic form destined to disappear. Plekhanov, who had been responsible for the Russian translation of the Communist Manifesto, when campaigning against the Populists in the eighties and nineties declared that by itself the *obshchina* could evolve only into a petty bourgeois capitalism, and Lenin too in his early polemical writings of the middle nineties merely took up the points already made by Plekhanov. He had insisted that capitalist evolution was an essential prelude to Socialist development and pointed to the substantial industrial growth going on apace in Russia under the policy of Count Witte, with the aid of foreign capital. For both reasons he welcomed, therefore, the negative side of Stolypin's agrarian reform of 1906, which aimed at doing away with the *mir* and building up a solid individual peasant property. Lenin saw in this a useful instru-

ment of proletarianization: it formally detached the industrial proletariat from the village, as they would no longer be able to claim a share in the re-distribution of land, and it created a village proletariat which after a time was bound to come into opposition with the well-to-do peasants favored by Stolypin.

The idea of a rural proletariat, as we know, was to play an important part in the strategy of the Soviet revolution (as in the other Communist revolutions in eastern Europe after the Second World War). But it was not a new idea. It had been stated by Marx and Engels quite clearly already in 1850 when they warned the German comrades against allowing the landed estates to be given to the peasants, as the French Revolution had done, leaving the agricultural proletariat as it was. The German workers, they wrote, "must demand that the confiscated property remain public property and be converted into workers' settlements, to be cultivated by the associated agricultural proletariat. . . . Just as the democrats combined with the peasants, the workers must combine with the agricultural proletariat."[88] The idea reappeared in 1869 in the resolution on agrarian policy of the Basle Congress of the International. It called upon the landless peasants to form a "laborers' union" and demand through it and for it to be given possession of State or Church or communal land; and it ended with a fiery appeal to land workers to carry on propaganda and so help to bring about "the day of redemption."

But in eastern Europe this was not merely a matter of class analysis. If they were to keep the revolutionary command in their own hands the eastern Marxists were bound to be more intransigent than their western comrades. Plekhanov had insisted that the Russian peasantry was essentially non-revolutionary in temper and so amorphous that a peasant revolt as a source of revolution would produce only anarchy. Not only did eastern Socialists believe that it was hopeless to try to win the peasants for the revolution but even Liberal economists, like the Rumanian Zeletin, described the peasant socially as "the very personification of the spirit of inertia."[89] When he founded the first Marxist group Plekhanov had thrown out the challenging dictum that "the Russian revolution will triumph as a proletarian revolution, or it will not triumph at all." The revolutionary program propounded in 1902 adopted—though only as a second thought, at the demand of Lenin—the Marxist doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the second congress of the Social Democratic Party, in 1903, was almost unanimous in its denunciation of the *narodniki*. Yet characteristically it was also Lenin who after the abortive revolt of 1905 perceived that the goal of a proletarian revolution, *via*

capitalist industrialization, might recede into the dimness of time unless an alliance could be contrived between proletariat and peasantry to speed the revolution forward to a Socialist victory. He had a theoretical basis for this attitude in his view on class divisions within the village, the way it evolved appearing clearly from two of his writings, of 1902 and 1907 respectively. *The Agrarian Program of Russian Socialism* still made a rough and sharp distinction between the working class, in which he included the landless agricultural laborers, and the peasants proper, a reactionary class. The later *Agrarian Question in Russia,* however, contained his classical analysis which divided the villagers into three groups: rich peasants, poor peasants who owned nothing and were semiproletarians, and a middle group who farmed their own land for their own subsistence in a small way. This intermediate group was steadily getting smaller, a few were getting rich but most of them were declining and swelled the ranks of the propertyless semiproletariat; and this numerous and growing poor peasantry had an obvious and sufficient common interest with the proletariat in drastic social change to justify a revolutionary alliance between them. In taking this view Lenin could fall back upon the later *dicta* of Marx and Engels, yet in spite of that it brought him into lasting conflict with the more unbending Marxism of Plekhanov and the Mensheviks.

Lenin's "deviation," which was to prove crucial in 1917, did not in fact mean any revision of his views on Communist society.[90] It sprang however from a vital sharpening of his views as to the strategy and goal of the proletarian revolution. For him revolutionary immediacy became the acid test of people's attitude as of party programs. In *What Is To Be Done?,* like Rosa Luxemburg in *Reform or Revolution,* Lenin defined the immediate objective as being above all things a matter of seizing power. In doing so they attacked both revisionism, which would put off the chance of such a conquest, and by implication also doctrinal orthodoxy, with its perpetual harping upon a set but indeterminate economic collectivism. In their view both these positions rested upon the same mistaken premise as to the goal of the proletarian movement. That goal was not the creation of the Socialist commonwealth, whose problems could be met and dealt with only as they arose and under the conditions in which they arose, but the seizure of political power. Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg held that only the presuppositions of Socialism were generated automatically by the working of capitalist evolution. The active source of power, however, depended upon political action, and therefore the only realistic goal for the movement was to secure revolutionary control for

the working class.[91] In Russia, in the absence of a mass of class-conscious workers, it was not possible to realize Socialism on the lines of the western formula "in free democratic forms," but only through the "dictatorship of the Party"; and for the same reason only through a necessary tactical alliance with the peasants.

So much of eastern Europe's subsequent revolutionary history is illuminated by these two points that it is worth looking a little closer into Lenin's views. They reveal cleary how much his Marxist doctrine was molded by his insight into local conditions, especially if one compares his views not with those of the purists who opposed them, but with those, for instance, of the Rumanian Marxist, Dobrogeanu-Gherea, who took much the same position as Lenin.[92] Both wrote about the same time under the influence of the revisionist crisis and were moved by the same need of how to relate the doctrine and program of Marxism to their own backward peasant countries. On some essential points the two men thought alike. They saw that the agrarian problem in the East was not the same as in the West, not a matter of small *versus* large farming, but of a downtrodden poor peasantry *versus* feudal *latifundia.* Lenin would seem to have felt his way towards such a view already in 1901, in *The Workers' Party and the Peasantry,* in which he suggested a distinction between the problems of capitalistic farming and those of residual feudal relationships on the land: "We have seen that in modern Russia two kinds of class antagonism are found side by side on the land—first the struggle between rural employers and laborers, and then the struggle between the landlord class and the peasantry as a whole. The first is growing and becoming more acute, the second is gradually abating. The first is still almost wholly in the future, the second already belongs mostly to the past. And yet in spite of this, it is the second antagonism that has the most vital and urgent significance for Russian Social-Democrats at present."[93] Because in the East they had to deal not with a "general" but with an "exceptional" aspect of small-scale farming, the preamble to the Socialist agrarian program asked for "the abolition of the remnants of serfdom and the free development of the class struggle in the country."

"Speaking generally," Lenin had added, "to encourage small property is reactionary, because it is directed against large-scale capitalistic economy and neglects the issue of the class struggle. But in this instance we want to support small property not against capitalism but against feudalism."[94] Lenin and Gherea were both on the side of the peasant in this issue, but not for the sake of the peasant. They both scorned the Populist

ideal of a peasant society, but they wanted restrictive conditions abolished, whether of a feudal nature or protective in the Liberal way, so as to leave capitalism free to spread in agriculture as well. For the same reason they were both at first against the wholesale expropriation and redistribution of the land, and also dubious about its nationalization as long as the state was so reactionary in character. All these, however, were mainly theoretical points. When it came to deriving from them a line of action differences began to creep into their views, and they are revealing.

When Gherea favored capitalism on the land it was to him not merely a matter of mending the existing semi-servile conditions but above all a necessary stage towards Socialism. To Lenin support of the small peasant was useful as it would "give a tremendous spurt to the intensification of the class struggle," both of the peasants against the landlords and then, when oppressive conditions had been removed, between peasants rich and poor. Having said earlier that nationalization was premature in Russia, as it would lead only to state Socialism,[95] by 1908 he had come to favor it, but again merely as a move in the revolutionary struggle against feudalism. It had nothing to do with Socialism as such. "There is no greater error than to think that nationalization of the land has anything in common with Socialism." Socialism meant the abolition of private enterprise in production and distribution, and as long as these remained, public ownership of the instrument meant nothing at all. "The economic significance of nationalization . . . does not lie . . . in the fight against bourgeois relationships . . . but in the fight against feudal relationships."[96] In much the same way, but more important still, he changed his views about the division of the land. He still regarded any such step as reactionary, but insisted that for a time after the revolution had been victorious it could not be avoided. The peasants were sure to ask for and they could not be denied or they would "turn towards counter-revolution."[97] The Social-Democrats had regarded total confiscation of the land as Utopian; their official program had merely demanded the return of the land which the peasants had cultivated as tenants but which was taken away from them when they were emancipated in 1861. On breaking away from the main party Lenin's group first hesitated, but later decided to "support the revolutionary activities of the peasants up to the confiscation" of private lands.

The conclusive difference between Lenin and Gherea lay in the awkward question of what part the peasants were to play in the revolution. When the revisionist crisis was at its height, at the turn of the century, Lenin had strongly defended Kaut-

sky's orthodox stand; like him he believed at the time that it was impossible to win over the peasants. Gherea went further and thought it not only useless but actually dangerous to pursue any Socialist agitation among the peasants: "It may be easy to rouse the villages . . . but I do not think it would be as easy to guide and control a powerful movement that might break out as a result of such propaganda. Let us not by imprudent propaganda raise a danger as great for the peasants as for the Socialist Party." For this reason Gherea was disturbed by the Russian revolt of 1905 and especially by the fierce peasant rising in Rumania in 1907. Like Plekhanov earlier, he warned his fellow Socialists that "the success of a *jacquerie* could only be profoundly bourgeois, reactionary and anti-Social-Democratic, not revolutionary."[98] Lenin on the other hand after 1905, when peasant delegates gathered in Moscow to form a Peasant Union, came to see that it was essential to win peasant support and so looked upon those risings as welcome rumblings of the gathering revolution.

It is easy to see from all this where the central difference lay. Though not without a feeling of genuine sympathy for the peasants, Gherea, like the Mensheviks, kept his mind steadfastly on the ends of a Socialist society. Lenin, on his part, never for a moment took his eyes away from the immediate goal of a victorious revolution. Theoretically, it might be said, there was nothing very new in this. It was close to the sequence of events which Marx had suggested as early as 1844 in the essay *Critical Glosses:*

> Revolution as such—the overthrow of the existing power and the dissolution of the old conditions—is a political act. But without revolution Socialism cannot carry on. Socialism needs this political act in so far as it needs destruction and dissolution. But when its organizing activity begins, when its ultimate purpose, its soul emerges, Socialism will throw the political husk away.

The aim of the Socialist revolution was first to overthrow the existing system; the reconstruction of society could come only after the complete break-up of the state. Whatever "organizing activity" preceded the revolution was merely organization for the struggle, not for the end.[99] And yet, was there any peculiar aberration in the position of the more orthodox Socialists? Just as the bourgeois political revolution had a fairly clear-cut idea as to what it wanted to put in the place of the "feudal" system it was demolishing, so the Socialist revolution had to have some new social conception ready to hand. Indeed, an interim vacuum was less conceivable in the latter instance, which contemplated a highly active centralized authority, in charge of all pro-

duction and distribution, than in the first, which contemplated merely a negative *laissez-faire* authority. Therefore Lenin's innovation was no more than a change in emphasis, a matter of tactical ingenuity, perhaps due to a sensible realization that while the several revolutionary groups were at one in wishing to demolish the existing system, they were unlikely to be of one mind as to what to put in its place. Moreover, and this no doubt was crucial with him, once the proletariat had reached the seat of power, by getting others to help in the revolutionary push, any differing views of those others as to the new system could be ignored.

The point of Lenin's "deviation" comes out clearly in its political effect, when compared with Gherea's. Gherea's keen and sympathetic analysis could in the end not give his Party a key to the agrarian problem, let alone a program of action among the peasants. Lenin's more flexible views prepared the basis on which the Bolsheviks were able to bid for victory in 1917. What mattered in Russia was that after 1905 the problem of fitting the peasants into the revolutionary scheme had become a pressing Party issue. Neglect of this inescapable problem had merely meant that in spite of many weak spots in the Populist position nothing in the Marxist position had been able to replace it, and the earlier doctrinaire *narodniki* were merely succeeded by the more up-to-date Social Revolutionaries. Some group and some program had to offer a rallying point for the almost innate rebelliousness of the peasants. When Socialists complained of peasant "inertia" it was inertia only towards the Marxist goal, not towards the existing order of things. From Stenka Razin to Pugachev and to 1917, Russian social history had unrolled itself continuously against a backdrop of rural violence.[100] It was always threatening when authority was weakened. Defeat in the Crimean War was followed by the emancipation of the peasants, defeat in the Manchurian War by the Stolypin reform. There is no reason to doubt that something would have had to be done for the peasants after the calamitous campaigns of the First World War even if no Bolsheviks had appeared on the scene. All these points were equally true of the neighboring countries. There also the peasants were in a state of endemic rebelliousness, they always had to be cajoled during a war and rewarded after it; and there also the Socialists had been unable to devise a policy that would bind the peasants to them.

The Populist doctrine, like the Marxist, did not remain untouched by time. Changing conditions and the facts brought to light by a more scientific inquiry into social problems forced it too through the sieve of reformism. At the beginning of this

century the radical group known as "Neo-Populists"[101] no longer maintained that capitalism was impossible in Russia; the growth of industry had gone too far for that. But they would still shut it out of agriculture. Their immediate aim was socialization, not Socialism: "a free *obshchina* in a free State," which apparently meant the communal holding of land but with a prohibition on employing paid labor or on leasing land within the *mir*. Nor did they any longer look upon the *mir* as "an offspring of natural law, a negation of evolution." On the contrary, they only saw in it "a form of transition" towards one of two possible ends. It might either develop into a (village) guild of production, which they would have preferred; or, if it were true that the *mir* was by way of falling to pieces, then the end could only be the nationalization of the land and its leasing by the State to individual small peasants, who would be forbidden to employ paid labor. A comprehensive co-operative system would enable the peasants to keep out the capitalist. The Neo-Populists also believed in technical progress. They spoke of the "increased purchasing power" which their program would give the peasants, admitting thereby that large industry had come to stay, whereas their original forerunners wanted "a general division of labor between human organs" to correspond to the least possible division of labor between individuals. The theoretical evolution had thus been considerable. But whether the shedding of the more Utopian trimmings of the doctrine was an advance or a weakness does not affect the argument of this study. The truth is that by making these theoretical concessions and yet retaining the idea of peasant farming as a likely final goal, the Neo-Populists demonstrated how much the peasant, as a fact and as an ideal, dominated the eastern movement for reform, and how little room there was therefore for an understanding with Marxism. Between the two lay a world of difference. Marxism, like capitalism, asked: How could one obtain from the existing surface a maximum return with a minimum of labor? The question which Populism put to itself was rather: How could one on the existing surface secure a living to a maximum number of people through the use of their labor in the villages?

The Populist tradition survived more tenaciously in the Social Revolutionary Party. Founded in 1900, it remained till the Soviet Revolution the chief party of the Left in Russia. The *narodniki* had been typical agrarian socialists rejecting the idea of industrialization and believing firmly in a unique Russian evolution on the basis of the *obshchina*, the *artel* and village handicrafts. The Social Revolutionaries, their heirs, in regard to industry thought like the Marxists, but at the same time

still believed in a peculiar Russian agrarian development. Their agrarian program contemplated a form of collectivist production reached by way of the *mir*, not of the class war. They stood for the nationalization of the land, but this was to be merely the means for introducing "equality in the right of use"; an idea which Marxists were bound to regard as economic sacrilege. This was no longer Socialism but a "socialist fog," scoffed the Social-Democrats; to which the Social Revolutionaries retorted that "we have ideals, but we have no idols." They refused, they said, to sacrifice on the altar of the proletariat the interests of the other exploited classes; they denounced the "superstition which depicts the peasant as . . . an inert and reactionary force." And while conceding the reality of the "capitalist evolution," they were as firm as the old Populists in denying that it was suitable for agrarian countries, especially for Russia, even if measured altogether by technical standards of production. Their program disclosed an effort to link up Populism with Marxism and Henry George. But notwithstanding their formal bow to the evolutionary theory, the reforms they demanded, and the leading role they assigned to the intelligentsia in securing them, reveal that inwardly the Social Revolutionaries believed in the "creative" power of "will." Philosophically, therefore, as well as pramatically, they were the unmistakable children of Populism.

The ideas thus nurtured by most Russian reformers received not a little support from the progress of the agrarian sciences. Even in the West, as we have seen, the economists had to admit that various factors had come to the help of the small farmer, in certain cases actually giving him an advantage over his capitalist competitor. The work of the Russian *zemtsvo* statisticians and agronomists seemed, however, to lift the whole debate on the relative productivity of small and large-scale agriculture onto an entirely new plane. Briefly put this was their argument. It was not possible to come to a definite conclusion simply by comparing quantitatively the productive capacity of the two modes of farming. The truth was that we were in the presence of two distinctive economic types—the "capitalist" type and the type of a wageless family economy." Their respective ability to survive in competition should be analyzed qualitatively, as neither the criteria nor the psychology of modern economics, with their background of "wage-labor," could give a true insight into the social-economic nature of the "family economy." Nor could modern economics lay down a universal basis for an agrarian policy. "The usual aim of a practical agrarian policy is to produce as high a rent as possible. That is the only purpose of capitalist agriculture." But in

agrarian countries with a dense population the practical politician must not hesitate "to place other ends and other criteria in the foreground, as his first duty is to secure to the bulk of the population the highest possible standard of living and the greatest possible gross income. . . . He will inevitably have to correct the economic-technical standpoint with the social, and in many respects the agrarian problem will become for him a problem of population."[102]

Here was something like a forerunner of the theory of "full employment." In the West the progress of agrarian science in certain ways had justified those reformist Socialists who had pleaded tolerance for the small producer, and gave an excuse to those who were merely anxious to conciliate him. In the East the scientific analysis of local conditions apparently led to the conclusion that it actually was the duty of the practical reformer to encourage and strengthen a system of smallholdings. The Populist was being arrayed in the armor of science. In a groping way that was the policy followed by the several eastern governments before the First World War, but generally this was done merely to allay now and then the restlessness of the countryside. There was no studied conception behind it; it was flagrantly opportunist, with no relation to any particular social doctrine or economic scheme. It was left for some great experiment to show which of the two, Marxism or Populism, could create a fitting Elysium for those peasant populations.

PART TWO/THE MARXIST REVOLUTION

Chapter 6

The Ideology in Action

AN OCCASION to test the Marxist theory and program came more quickly than even Marx had anticipated. The old political regimes on the Continent had generally been strained by the events of 1848, and the Russian regime by the war of 1905; but the course of the First World War led to the utter collapse of the Continental empires, upsetting their social as well as their political structure. In central and eastern Europe the conflict ended in a wildfire of civil wars, with the Bolshevik revolution flaring high and scattering sparks across the socially parched peasant countries. In a way that seemed to provide the kind of situation which Marx and Engels had in mind when they said, in their Preface to the Russion edition of the *Communist Manifesto,* that if a Russian revolution were to become the signal for a proletarian revolution in the West, the Russian *obshchina* might serve as a starting point for a Communist revolution.[1] In the event it proved the starting point rather for a peasant revolution, though the *obshchina* itself was consumed altogether in that social conflagration.

A peasant revolution was indeed the natural immediate result of any political upheaval in that region, where general conditions and trends were closely alike.[2] The merest glance at the social background must show why this was bound to be so. The customary historical verdict has been to charge the long Turkish domination with all the evils from which the peoples of south-eastern Europe had suffered. While that domination certainly warped the political growth of the Balkan peoples, the same circumstances also delayed the social divisions and hardening which usually went with the growth of the modern state. Because of the peculiar nature of Turkish control the peoples of south-eastern Europe never experienced feudalism in the western manner. It was only as Turkish rule receded that the internal struggle for power began to take shape, as it was only with the freedom to organize the national economy that the social struggle began to have any meaning. For a long period it was in both respects almost wholly a struggle between land-

lords and peasants. In Ottoman society the rights of landlords over the labor and person of the peasants was more carefully circumscribed, and in any case the Turkish argument would apply only to south-eastern Europe but not to Russia or to Hungary, yet pressure on the peasants and the domination of the landed class was if anything worse in those two countries. The process of organizing a modern state and economic life brought many claims from governments and landlords, though it was especially as the western demand for cereals and the opportunity to export them increased that the rape of peasant land and abuse of the peasants' labor became tempting; as it was only as the native landed class got control of political power that they were in a position to satisfy that temptation.

Enormous *latifundia* were thus put together by them in recent times. The Rumanian poet, Eminescu, in one of his essays spoke of the country as being "but a big estate, administered like an estate—a complex of *latifundia* in which private law is public law, the inheritance of landed wealth the inheritance of power in the State." The domain and status of the peasantry were being correspondingly depressed, and as the landowners were for the most part absentee landlords, busy with public and social functions, and farming remained extensive, the peasant's share of the produce was equally reduced. He did not gain as a laborer what he lost as a farmer. In the Rumanian countries, for instance, when the land rights of the peasants were first restricted, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the number of large animals for which the average peasant household could still claim grazing was limited to a dozen or more, the households with only four animals forming the lowest category; by the time the peasants were emancipated in 1864 those with four animals had become the leading category; and by 1906 over many parts of the country one-third of the peasant households no longer had any large animals at all. In the measure in which the landlords got hold of more land they also needed more labor. The old regime had obliged the peasants to work six to twenty-four days in the year for the landlord; under the new regime of "free labor" the legislator had to intervene to insure that two days were left each week for the peasant's own fields. But this did not mean simply a change from an income in kind to one in cash. In the same year 1906, a year after the Russian revolution of 1905 and on the eve of Rumania's peasant rising of 1907—which was not checked until some ten thousand peasants had been shot—an official inquiry found that in general rates for agricultural labor were still those fixed about 1866, and even so that only about one-third of the contracts reached the level of those "customary" rates. Most con-

tracts, moreover, included a variety of penalizing clauses, like those found to stipulate that "the father of a family who had living with him married sons and daughters who had not contracted for agricultural work shall himself be excluded from all contracts."

The grim effect of all this was seen in the portion left for the peasant to eat out of what he produced. Those were the years when the eastern countries were becoming the "granary of Europe," yet as those big exports were being built up the peasant's means of living was being forced down. In Rumania the consumption of maize, the peasant's staple food, fell from 230 kilograms per head of population in 1890 to 146 kilograms in 1903. The same thing was happening in Russia where the increase in cereal exports after the emancipation of the serfs in 1861 was so rapid that it came to dominate the western markets, but at the same time government had to devote increasing sums for the relief of starving villages. From a yearly average of 800 roubles in the sixties relief rose to an average of about 1½ million roubles in 1890, to 90 millions in 1890-1900, to 118 millions in 1901-5; in the sixties relief was needed in 8 departments, in the seventies in 15, in the eighties in 25, in the nineties in 29, and after 1900 in 31 departments. In the period between the two wars the Mixed Nutrition Committee of the League of Nations could still report that eastern and southeastern Europe was an area where "malnutrition prevails extensively and there is often a lack of staple foods as well," as proved also by the high incidence of pellagra and other deficiency diseases.[3]

All those flush exports from eastern Europe were literally starvation exports. That was due not merely to the ways of the landowners but still more to the general policy of the State. Public means and resources were devoted to furthering industrial development and the accumulation of capital, but hardly anything to improvements on the land and in agriculture, and the whole fiscal policy of those states had the same tendency. The burden on the peasants was all the heavier as they had in any case a very low cash income. In a paper written in the nineteen-twenties the Rumanian economist, Zeletin,[4] suggested in a candid apologia for the system that there was a difference between *Juridical Theft and Economic Theft*: he admitted that unorthodox ways had been used by the ruling groups for building up a national capital, yet what else, he asked, could they do? It was all very well for the French and the English to preach fairness in policy and administration; they had been able to accumulate a large national capital by exploiting the natives in their colonies. But whom could a poor and new

country like Rumania exploit? Only its own natives—the peasants. The toll taken from the peasants' social well-being was, so to speak, a levy for national economic independence. All one need add is that whether pursued in the service of national capitalism, as in Rumania by Vintilă Brătianu, with his slogan "Through Ourselves," or in the service of national communism, as by the Soviets, with their slogan "Socialism in One Country," policy and effect were much the same as far as the peasants were concerned.

The state in which the peasants thus found themselves in Russia, and also in the neighboring countries after decades of national independence, was not extravagantly described by Dobrogeanu-Gherea's "neo-serfdom." Inevitably it had also a political aspect. Serfdom, old or new, could not be imposed by democratic means. On gaining their independence the countries of south-eastern Europe had been provided with the best possible written constitutions, some of them even under international aegis, but oppressive social and economic policies had to work with arbitrary political methods. In earlier periods, when political forms were still rudimentary, the peasant "estate" had always had spokesmen of its own in the sporadic assemblies; and wonderfully simple and telling was the language in which those unschooled tillers of the soil drove home their point. "Why do the gentlemen say it was not slavery," exclaimed a Rumanian peasant deputy in the Mixed Commission of 1848, "for we know it to have been slavery, this sorrow that we have sorrowed." Yet now under universal suffrage rarely was a single true peasant found in the democratic parliaments, and the varied means by which such results were achieved would make a suggestive manual of political gerrymandering. The interesting point, if one may anticipate a bit, is that these methods had to become more sharp and open after the First World War, when the peasants began to organize powerful parties of their own. By violence or subterfuge the activities and prospects and claims of those parties were hamstrung or cut short, until the process by the inexorable law of oppression ended in every one of those eastern countries (except Czechoslovakia) in popular or royal dictatorship. In this respect, too, as far as the peasant was concerned, in the end there was little difference between the methods of the Right and of the Left; in one case as in the other dictatorship was merely the political tool of similarly forced economic and social policies.

Against that historical and social background the Russian Revolution, and Bolshevik policy in particular, acquire a truer perspective, with their light and shade. It is unlikely that any-

one could have forecast the way in which the Revolution worked itself out, or indeed that anyone can as yet analyze soundly why and how things happened as they did. What is plain, and relevant to our subject, is that it was a double revolution—a peasant revolution and a political one; and while the peasant revolution at first took more or less its natural course, the other was given an accidental twist through the sudden injection of the Bolshevik element into the process of revolutionary gestation. Peasantism and Marxism were thus brought sharply face to face, not as before in a theoretical disputation but in a direct and purposeful issue of power. Trotsky has pointed out frankly in his brilliant *History of the Russian Revolution* all that divided the two categories in the stream of social evolution. In Russia, he wrote, the "chronic lag of ideas and relations behind new objective conditions," which creates "in a period of revolution that leaping movement of ideas and passions," was of a double kind. Russia's agrarian problem was still unsolved; the bourgeois revolution that had so profoundly affected France and England had had but small effect in Russia. "In order to realize the Soviet State there was required a drawing together and mutual penetration of two factors belonging to completely different historic species: a peasant war —that is, a movement characteristic of the dawn of bourgeois development—and a proletarian insurrection, the movement signalizing its decline. That is the essence of 1917."

Herein lay the root of the many turns in Soviet agrarian policy, and in no small degree indeed of the Soviet system's whole dictatorial destiny. From the moment that Marxism, that is, analytical theory based on English conditions, gave place to Leninism, that is, revolutionary strategy based on the "objective situation" in eastern Europe, the issue of rent, which presupposes the existence of capitalist farming, was thrust into the background by the peasants' demand for land. Trotsky's historical distinction was in fact reflected strikingly in the attitude of the two revolutions on this issue. It was characteristic of Kerensky's "provisional" regime, with its bourgeois-liberal tendency, that it proposed to postpone agrarian reform till the convening of a national assembly. The government which took over after the October Revolution, however, at once handed over the land by decree to the peasants. Lenin had included the Left Social Revolutionaries in his government and had taken over their agrarian program, nationalization of all the land and its equal distribution among the peasants, though the Social Revolutionary group left it after only a few months.

There was indeed not much else that Lenin could do. The peasant revolution was well under way by the time the Bolshe-

viks staged their "proletarian" attack. From an admirable first-hand study of reports of local authorities Professor Robinson has shown that the rural revolution had spread quickly and effectively to all the provinces.[5] The collapse of the old regime had been like a break in a dam, through which first a small trickle and then a rushing stream of spontaneous revolutionary action poured. The peasants began at once to take over forcibly large estates and forests, the number rising with every month—from 17 in March, 204 in April, 259 in May, 577 in June, to 1,122 in July.[6] It was estimated that in the first two years the peasants in thirty-six departments had taken over 86 per cent of the large estates and 80 per cent of their farm equipment; this increased their holding from 80 to 96.8 per cent of all usable land.

But Yakovlev's description of the way in which the peasants dealt with the landlords also brought out clearly the non-political character of their revolt.[7] The Bolsheviks, however, had reasons of their own not only for accepting the accomplished fact but for speeding the process. They had before then adopted the view that the simplest way to break the back of "feudal-bourgeois regimes" in the eastern countries was to let the peasants take over the land. At the particular moment, and in opposition to the Kerensky regime and its supporters, it was also a matter of policy with them to stop the "imperialist" war so as to let the revolutions which they implicitly expected in Germany and elsewhere get under way; and this fitted in with their urgent local need to prevent the army under its Tsarist officers from being turned against them. Though passive, the Russian armies were still holding the front, but they quickly disintegrated when the peasant soldiers heard that the land was theirs for the taking. One might perhaps sum it all up in this way, that 1917 was a diffused peasant revolution which the Bolsheviks took in hand and organized. They would indeed not have got very far had they not literally released and spurred the pent-up restlessness of the peasant masses. Evidence for this view is to be found in the political war of maneuver which for many years after they had to wage, and in the drastic means they finally had to use before they could bring to a head their own Bolshevik revolution.

All this enabled Berdiaev to argue that the Bolshevist revolution had brought to pass the Utopian side of Marxism but discarded its "scientific" aspect.[8] While the Soviets had expropriated capitalists and landowners, they had actually impropriated the peasants. That merely brings out again the difference between Marxist theory and Leninist practice. In the early years Lenin was in charge of policy, and everything that has

happened since shows the masterly way in which he kept the Bolshevik hand at the helm of the revolutionary ship in spite of its mixed and uncertain ship's company and the turbulent political seas. The peasant problem especially was a baffling task, and within the new ruling group counsels on it were divided. Trotsky had little faith in the prospect of even a transient revolutionary alliance with the peasants while the workers retained control in their own hands. In the Preface to *The Year 1905*, written in 1922, he uttered the warning that "the proletariat will come into conflict not only with the bourgeois groups which supported the proletariat during the first stages of the revolutionary struggle, but also with the broad masses of the peasants." He believed that "the contradiction inherent in the position of a workers' government in a backward country with an overwhelming peasant population can be solved only on an international scale, on the arena of a world proletarian revolution."[9] Others, like the economist Varga, fresh from his Hungarian experience (and later to play a leading part in Soviet economics), warned the Communists that "no question is more important for the development of the revolutionary movement in Europe than the conversion of the peasants."[10] Lenin's way was to resort to tactical concessions and retreats when the going was risky; while later Stalin used class divisions in the village, as far as they went, but mostly force to break the resistance of the kulaks.

Lenin at any rate accepted the situation frankly from the beginning, before he even entered Russia. In 1917, in the *Report on the Political Situation*, he insisted that "private ownership of ground and land must be abolished. That is a task we must face because the majority of the people want it." Later he put this somewhat ambiguous statement in a more explicit way in his reply to the criticism of Kautsky[11]—his sharp argument being all the more illuminating if one remembers how before 1905 he had approved Kautsky's orthodox stand against the revisionists:

> Kautsky will never be able to refute the view that equal land tenure has a progressive and revolutionary significance in the bourgeois-democratic revolution. Such a revolution cannot go beyond this. On reaching this limit it clearly, quickly and easily reveals to the masses the inadequacy of bourgeois-democratic solutions and the necessity for proceeding beyond their limits, of passing to Socialism. Having overthrown Tsarism and landlordism the peasantry dreamed of equal land tenure and no power on earth could have prevented them, when freed from landlordism and from the bourgeois parliamentary republican state, from trying to realize this dream. The proletarians said to the peasants: We shall help you to reach "ideal" capitalism, for equal tenure is the idealizing of capitalism

from the point of view of small producers. At the same time we will prove to you its inadequacy and the necessity of passing to the cultivation of the land on a social basis.[12]

But Lenin also felt that the nationalization of the land was not something that could be carried through with the old state officials. In April of that year he had pointed out that organs of self-administration had already sprung up all over Russia; the village commune, which meant "complete self-administration" and "the absence of all tutelage from above," would suit the peasants well and was to be encouraged.

Lenin's immediate policy would seem, therefore, to have accepted the double Populist principle of land nationalization and distribution. Early Soviet policy hardly tried to break the individualistic system of landholding which had been at the basis of the Stolypin reform; "the socialization of the land" introduced with the Land Law of February 1918 was again simply the idea of the Social Revolutionary Party. Lenin had good reasons for following this line, but what is curious is that he tried to justify it in Marxist terms. He had worked out his basic view of class-division in the village in *The Agrarian Question in Russia,* written in 1908, when he assumed that the "semi-proletarian" village poor would have a common interest with the urban proletariat in breaking down the old order. That seemed a reasonable view of revolutionary strategy, but in 1919 he went further, saying that "having defeated the bourgeoisie, the proletariat must unswervingly conduct its policy towards the peasants along the following lines: the proletariat must support and distinguish the peasant toilers from the peasant owners, the peasant workers from the peasant hucksters, the peasant who labors from the peasant who profiteers. In this distinction lies the whole essence of Socialism."[13] Whatever the circumstances, it seems curious to find Lenin stooping to such quibbling. His argument was an echo of an earlier attempt by western reformists to get out of a similar theoretical dilemma, but even they did not describe this as the "essence of Socialism."

Tactically, on the other hand, there was a clear purpose behind the distinction, and one which Stalin was to apply later on. It was no less than a revolutionary plan of campaign: "first with the 'whole' of the peasantry against the monarchy, the landlords, the medieval regime (and to that extent the revolution remains bourgeois, bourgeois-democratic). Then with the poorest peasants, with the semi-proletarians, with all the exploited, against capitalism, including the rural rich, the kulaks, the profiteers, and to that extent the revolution becomes a So-

cialist one."[14] Socialism clearly is used here to mean the revolutionary action and not the final scheme of the new society, and it was always the first that Lenin kept firmly in mind. By adapting his tactics to the problem of a revolutionary relationship with the peasants Lenin was able to give the movement in eastern Europe a dynamic content which the Social-Democrats had failed to give, and one inspired by a much more realistic appraisal of the actual forces at work in those backward agrarian countries.

It is useless to try to make sense out of the theoretical twists in these arguments or the contradictions in them. Nationalization of the land and at the same time its division into small lots were not economic measures but political moves. The first simply served to sweep away feudal landholding and relations, though it was also useful as the "agrarian system most flexible from the point of view of the transition to Socialism."[15] The equal division of the land in its turn was simply necessary to gain the support of the peasants. Lenin said that "when adopting the Land Socialization Act—the 'spirit' of which is equal land tenure—the Bolsheviks most explicitly and definitely declare: this is not our idea, we do not agree with this slogan, but we think it our duty to pass it because it is demanded by the overwhelming majority of the peasants."[16] It may be doubted whether the Bolshevik standpoint was really put so plainly at the time, but it is evident that the distribution of the land was a matter of revolutionary tactics to fit the fluctuations of the struggle, and that was equally true of local action. For while he urged that such action was to be encouraged, Lenin promptly added that "we must be centralists. . . . Only our party can give the watchwords which will really drive the revolution forward."

The purpose of the Bolshevik revolution was set and unbending from the outset, and the persistence of an autonomous peasantry had no place in it. Yet on both theoretical and practical grounds this was perhaps the weakest link in the revolutionary armor. Lenin had pointed out on an earlier occasion that "the peasant question in modern capitalist society most frequently causes perplexity and vacillation among Marxists, and most of the attacks on Marxism by bourgeois (academic) political economists." He drew the practical moral of this when announcing his New Economic Policy: "The peasant question, beyond doubt, is solved *theoretically*," he granted to his purist followers, "but we know, because we have made this experience, that the theoretical solution of a problem is far from its practical realization. To use force against the peasant middle class is the worst thing we could do. A class which contains so many millions of people must be treated with consideration."[17]

To prevent such perplexities in Bolshevik policy, and peasant opposition to it before it was consolidated, Lenin therefore imposed a line of his own. The conclusion of his speech was a remarkably frank admission of how paradoxical, and almost a warning of how brittle, was a Marxist revolution in the agrarian East: "One must remember," he said, "that it is easier to create the proletarian State in a country given to large-scale production than in a country where the small proprietor dominates. We have not forgotten that the proletariat is one thing and small production another. We must admit the need for concessions . . . in order to establish between the proletariat and the peasant class such relations as will ensure the existence of one and of the other."[18]

Chapter 7

Soviet Agrarian Policy

THE WHOLE purpose of Lenin's revolutionary policy had been to "neutralize" the peasants at a critical stage in the Party's struggle and prevent them from going over to the counter-revolution. He said on one occasion: "Ten to twenty years of proper relations with the peasantry and victory on a world-wide scale is assured, otherwise twenty to forty years of torture, of white guard terror."[19] Even the choice of Kalinin as President in 1919 probably had something to do with this, as he was one of the very few leading Bolsheviks whose peasant origin and attachments were well-known. If to avoid opposition was the first need of Bolshevik policy, another need, the direct corollary of the first and equally urgent, was to secure the peasants' produce. The two needs were not easy to reconcile, as was evident from the relation between the social changes on the land and their economic effects. For the peasants the immediate benefits were enormous. The landlords had gone and with them burdensome conditions of tenure, often coupled in Russia as in Rumania and elsewhere with obligatory labors as the last vestiges of feudalism. Peasants had no longer to pay rent, their debts had been wiped out and in general they were better off than ever before. They were acquiring all sorts of possessions as townspeople were bartering household and other goods in exchange for food; at the same time, being now able to use more of their produce and time for themselves, they were better fed and their houses and buildings better kept. This was no

unusual phenomenon in countries whose agriculture rested so heavily on a peasant subsistence economy. But while the mass of smallholders may have been self-supporting, they produced little or no surplus for the towns; and even for the peasants it was to prove but a temporary artificial prosperity.

Conditions on the land after the Revolution were bound to lead to a decline in agriculture. The peasants had got practically all the land, but each had only a little. It meant a great increase in the number of small peasants who had no animals or implements, who were neither helped economically nor allowed to part with their land—the encouragement, as has been said, of "village poverty" and the continued tolerance of backward methods of cultivation, as described by Sir John Maynard.[20] At the same time there had been much loss and destruction of implements, but no new production; likewise much loss of animals,[21] which meant also a loss of manure, while artificial fertilizers were hardly available.[22] And all this was made worse by the disintegration of the co-operative system and of the fine agrarian work of the *zemstva.* Added to political confusion these circumstances inevitably resulted in a decline of the cultivated area,[23] and as a consequence a decline in agricultural production.[24] The peasants had neither material nor political incentive to produce more. There was little to be had in return, and having derived all the benefits they could from their own social revolution they had no clear conscious or practical link with the new proletarian revolution. They were getting little schooling or guidance; many teachers had left the villages, while in the pressure of events the urban revolutionaries had little time or chance to pay attention to the peasants. Lenin complained that the central authority, "the vanguard of the revolution, was in danger of being isolated from the mass of the people, from the peasantry which we should be adroitly leading onwards."

The truth is that the whole episode had amounted to a profound change in land tenure but with none of the changes in production which (as Lenin said plainly in *The Agrarian Question in Russia*) were the essence of the Socialist system.[25] There was indeed something strangely anomalous about the whole situation on the land. As might have been expected from its importance, the agrarian question had produced a vast amount of official literature since the Revolution.[26] Yet the change in land tenure as it existed in the early years was recorded nowhere in any formal legal shape, for the simple reason that it had never been enacted as a standing reform; the breakup of the old estates had been decreed as a process, and the whole land nationalized merely as a general principle. The peasant revolution

had been accepted because that was inevitable, and also because it was a convenient radical means of destroying the bourgeoisie economically.[27] But Marxism in general and the Bolsheviks in particular had no ready agrarian program to fit to this peasant revolution. At the All-Russian Congress of the Communist Party, in December 1921, Kamenev admitted that "the proletarian State was unable to administer and shape as a Socialist organization the property which it was compelled to seize." There was much confusion even in the forms of landholding, but the resulting technical evils could not be overcome in such circumstances: the strips which made up each peasant's holding were even more numerous and widely scattered and more unmanageable than before. At the same congress the Commissar for Agriculture, Ossinsky, thus summed up the situation and the problem: "Our peasants are making everywhere colossal efforts to clarify their relations to the land and to their neighbors, to do away with the confusion which—we must be frank—the Revolution has not decreased but increased."[28]

As an American journalist, Mr. Louis Levine, put it at the time, "the sweep and scope of the revolutionary changes contemplated determined the extent of the sacrifice exacted." The terrible evidence of the price exacted was the famine of 1921-22 when millions starved and the entire nation was underfed. It was becoming increasingly clear that the peasant revolution had become detached from the political revolution. Passive resistance has been the traditional way of farmers and peasants of holding out against what they feel to be oppressive impositions. In the measure in which the authorities succeeded in getting hold of the peasants' corn the cultivated area went on shrinking. Therefore in 1919 a government decree "socialized" eighteen million peasant farmsteads and brought them under the control of State Committees whose function it was to prescribe and supervise agricultural work. The policy of requisitioning, under which the peasants had to surrender against a small cash payment all surplus produce beyond certain fixed quantities for themselves and for their animals, had merely the effect, as Kamenev admitted, that the peasants reduced their production to the quantity they themselves consumed. By the spring of 1921 Bolshevik policy towards the villages found itself well-nigh exhausted, until Lenin broke through the impasse with his New Economic Policy.

The N.E.P. was essentially a reversion to individualism in production. The Agrarian Code of October 1922 decreed that all land was the property of the nation, but guaranteed perpetual hereditary use to those who cultivated it. A difference between industry and agriculture had been accepted in the origi-

nal Soviet Constitution, which declared all land "state property owned by the whole people" (Article 6), though land covered by collective farms was secured to the members of the collective "for their use free of rent and for an unlimited time, that is in perpetuity" (Article 8). While, therefore, both "workers" and "peasants" were referred to as "toilers," there was a difference in their relation to the ownership of the means of production. Industrial and other such enterprises were owned by the whole people, in the form of state property; collective farms were allowed on the other hand to enjoy a special kind of communal property, on behalf of their members, but were not public property in the sense of the first group. Article 7 decreed that "livestock and implements, the products of the collective farms and co-operative organizations, as well as their common buildings, constitute the common Socialist property of the collective farms and co-operative organizations." The peasant seemed indeed well established, for the Code of 1922 even adopted Stolypin's ideas of dividing up the remaining common lands and of consolidating the many peasant strips. What was more significant, it conceded specifically the right of the peasants to farm collectively or individually, as their own local *obshchina* might decide. To the peasant this may have been mere theory, but he got something more tangible when the Tenth Party Congress accepted the principle, and the Central Executive Committee issued the decree, abolishing compulsory levies and replacing them with taxes in kind, the surplus being left at the free disposal of the peasants. This worked well, so that production increased in 1922. The surrender seemed almost complete when in 1925 a decree permitted the hiring of agricultural labor, a thing not allowed in the first years of the N.E.P.

Many sections of the people must have been pleased with the New Economic Policy, but the peasants benefited most from it at the time. This was no chance effect. Its tactical significance appears clearly when we compare the way in which Lenin dealt about the same time with the so-called "Workers' Opposition." They had asked for a measure of autonomy for industrial producers, proposing that the central organs managing the country's whole economy should be elected by the united trade-associations of producers. Lenin scornfully denounced the idea as "anarcho-syndicalist deviation": a union of producers was possible only in a classless society composed exclusively of workers, whereas in Russia there were still two classes left, the workers and the peasants.[29] At any rate, from the peasants' point of view the new policy would seem to have been so successful that provincial delegates to the Twelfth Congress of the

Communist Party, in April 1923, reported that by a simple practical deduction many peasants had come to think that Bolsheviks and Communists were different people. To the former, with Lenin as their leader, they attributed the gift of the land, while they accused the latter of all the measures which seemed to impose upon them a new bondage, this time to the State. With Lenin ill at the time, the peasants seemed restive. Kamenev, one of the acting triumvirate, had to stress at that congress that it was necessary to ease the heavy burden of taxes weighing upon the peasants and reassure them that the Communist Party was "strictly following Lenin's advice" and would continue "to pursue the same policy towards the peasants" which Lenin had followed "for the past five years." If the peasants needed convincing that they were being fairly treated, the "Workers' Opposition," on the other hand, were insinuating that N.E.P. really stood for "New Exploitation of the Proletariat." Therefore in his introductory speech Zinoviev had to admonish them, claiming that it was in the workers' interest that the State should do all it could for the peasants, because "agriculture is the only source which can supply the means for the recovery of industry."

The N.E.P. was clearly meant to encourage some emulation in production by a neutral attitude towards rival forms of landholding and farming. Not unnaturally this led for a time to a decrease in collective farming and to a speeding up in the process of establishing private holdings.[30] Yet Lenin was not afraid that the N.E.P. might restore the power of capitalism; the danger, he said, was rather that the peasants might be alienated through having to suffer too great a scarcity for too long. The combination of a free agriculture with a State-controlled industry was represented in theoretical writings as a necessary intermediate stage in the economic growth of the Soviet Republic, and as an adequate basis for progress towards Socialism. It was a safe compromise, so it was said, as long as control of economic policy was firmly in proletarian hands. "At no stage is the Socialist transformation purely a working-class affair; but the leading part played by the urban working-class is even more strongly emphasized because the reforms aimed at and achieved by their peasant allies would have no Socialist significance unless the 'commanding heights'—of an essentially urban character—were nationalized."[31] But this view was far from being accepted by all the party leaders. Trotsky, who never trusted the idea of a truce with the peasants, led the opposition to the N.E.P. In the *History of Literature in the Revolution* he quoted with approval Boris Bilnyak's antithesis between the spirit of the October Revolution and the spirit of the present:

one, the conscious, purposeful and dynamic principle of life; the other, the elemental, senseless, biological automatism of life, "that is, . . . the peasant roots of our old Russian history."

Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev were alarmed by the growing power of the peasants. The old revolutionary argument came up again. They had been capable of revolutionary action until they got land, but after that, because of their attachment to the land, could not go on to build a Socialist society, and when forced forward by the proletariat, the dominant force in the new economic and social order, they proved unwilling and uncertain allies. Therefore the propertyless urban workers could only hope, as it were, to hold the fort till the workers of the West would join forces with them. In June 1926 the three men agreed upon a common platform. Their program did not look upon peasants and agriculture as an integral whole, a source from which capital would be accumulated for the Socialist state; rather it drew the traditional distinction between the kulak who used his strength to oppress the poor, and who should be forced through higher taxation to surrender his corn, and the poor peasant who should be helped through lower taxes. Peasant agriculture should be ended as soon as possible and collectivized—a reversion to pre-N.E.P.—and the way for this should be prepared by co-operative production[32] and the speeding up of mechanization and electrification.

In *The True Position in Russia,* written in 1927, Trotsky granted that collectivization and mechanization would fit the peasants to play their part in the building up of a Socialist state. But even so he still held that world revolution was necessary. The peasant could not by his nature be assimilated into Socialism because he could not be "planned." His support could be won by improving his standard of living through a better supply of consumer goods, but Russian industry was not in a position to supply them. Hence world revolution had to precede the gaining of the peasant's goodwill for building up Socialism. Trotsky summed up his position in a speech he intended to give to the Central Executive in October 1927, but which the Executive refused to hear. It was to be a severe indictment of the Government's policy, with special emphasis on conditions on the land: the Government was deliberately favoring the kulak; State credits did not reach the poorer peasants, and the incidence of taxation was also unkind to them; nothing was done to iron out the disparity between spring prices, when the poor peasant had to buy high, and the autumn prices when he had to sell low. He urged that industry must produce the machines to increase agricultural production; and that land, labor and produce must be pooled under State control.

This was, of course, a plea, a demand for a return to Marxism. For one who saw the peasants as Trotsky did, the international union of the proletariat and the international division of labor, and the world revolution which alone could make them possible, were absolute conditions for realizing a Socialist society. What he feared from theoretical deductions, others assumed to have become fact from what they saw. Not only inside Russia but in the outside world as well the impression made by the turn in policy represented by the N.E.P. was such as to make it seem that in the villages the Soviets had reached their Canossa. That impression was heightened by the social effect of the N.E.P. in the villages; there was much controversy on this point in those years, but statistics seemed to show a growing differentiation into poor and prosperous peasants, eliminating the middle peasant. The countryside had lost the landlord, but the kulak ruled in his place.[33] A well-informed writer could say at the time that the Communist Party Congress of 1923 "made it absolutely clear that, whatever party is at the head of the government in Russia, and under whatever name it rules, the peasants, inarticulate as they are at present and seemingly powerless, will always remain the real dictators in Russia."[34]

The best commentary on this judgment is the way the Soviets ultimately brought about the collectivization of agriculture, and also the way they dealt with the co-operatives, both of them matters which also offer the best insight into the real ends of Soviet policy. It is not possible to lay down the precise circumstances which put an end to the New Economic Policy, about 1927 or 1928, and led to the third phase in Soviet policy, that of planning and collectivization, though they have been described and argued out at length by many writers. Here the merest summary of events will suffice, as we are concerned not with the rights and wrongs of the policy, whether from the economic or social point of view, but simply with its working in the light of Marxist theory and Soviet practice.

The "special form of alliance" between workers and peasants, which Stalin had analyzed in *Problems of Leninism* and which had been embodied in the final Statutes of the Comintern (1928), was based of course on the crucial point that the proletariat must never surrender its revolutionary leadership, but equally on the view that collectivization would have to be a gradual process. Engels had assumed that it would take generations to achieve, and Lenin had insisted that in the eventual progress from individual to socialized agriculture the small peasant must be persuaded, not coerced. The whole issue was

bound to become a matter of fresh concern, however, as new problems came to press upon the Soviet regime. In the absence of foreign capital, which had built up earlier Russian industry, and of foreign loans, which the Soviets were determined to avoid, imports of capital equipment could only be paid for by increased agricultural exports. Industrialization could not be pressed or even maintained without some planned system and some constraint to make the peasants adopt more productive methods, so as to create the surplus which alone could make industrial expansion possible. In their turn lack of imports and inadequate industrial growth made it impossible to supply the existing collective farms with machines which would give them an advantage over the kulaks. When putting forth his N.E.P. Lenin had argued that "general collectivization of the peasants is indeed a means of organizing the alliance between them and the town workers, and securing the supply of food. But general collectivization will become possible only when machinery and electrification are generally provided."[35] The peasants on their side had been apt to use the greater freedom of the New Economic Policy to hold back supplies and use them as a bargaining counter. Year after year the spring brought a political crisis within the ruling circles, especially on the question as to what concessions should be made to the kulaks—anyone cultivating twenty hectares or more was a kulak—to induce them to feed the towns. In *The Spirit of Post-War Russia* Dr. Schlesinger suggests, however, that it was the new fear of war which brought things to a head.

Once the idea that war might come was accepted the State could no longer rely on uncertain requisitions, especially as it also had to try to accumulate grain stocks as war reserves. Agrarian policy in any case had to be reshaped when the Soviet Union embarked upon its first Five Year Plan, for 1926-31. Towards the end of 1927, when still only some 3 per cent of the land was State-farmed, Molotov had drawn attention to the backwardness of agriculture and demanded that the village collectives—valuable despite their defects—should be developed in conjunction with the general plan of industrialization; and in June 1928, Stalin urged the need to develop the existing collectives as intensively as possible and to establish new ones. The Fifteenth Party Congress, in December 1927, had already put restrictions on the leasing of land and the hiring of labor, and had accepted the principle of gradual collectivization by example. The peasants for one reason or another withheld supplies in 1927-28; and so in April 1929, in spite of opposition within the Politburo, Stalin gave up the Leninist line and the Party Congress ordered the creation, within the framework of the

Five Year Plan and as part of the new line of "Socialism in one country," of a socialized area of production to counterbalance the individual peasant economy.

The process of collectivization soon took on more or less obvious forms of compulsion and seemed so successful at first that Stalin could say at the end of the same year that "if collectivization goes on at this rate the contrast between town and village will be wiped out in accelerated tempo." In a speech at the end of 1929 he stressed that it was impossible for part of the Soviet economy to be frozen as private peasant farming while in industry the socialized sector was growing fast. "Either one way or the other: either back—to capitalism—or forward —to Socialism. There is and there can be no third way."[36] He again attacked the old revisionist belief that the peasant could survive and urged that he must be liberated from his slavish attachment to his tiny plot of land. Fortunately, he said, that attachment no longer mattered in Russia where there was no more any private ownership in land, thanks to its nationalization at the time of the Revolution; an assumption hardly borne out by the relentless pressure that had to be used against the peasants. Executive Committees in the districts vied with each other in the thoroughness of their administrative measures; a district was not infrequently declared an "area of complete collectivization," and where persuasion did not help other means were used. At the beginning of 1930 the Central Committee of the Party estimated that the tempo envisaged in the Plan had been outstripped and denounced all attempts to slow it down; the aim, it was announced, was to complete the process within three years.

It soon became apparent, however, that the impression of accelerated success, derived from the rapid increase in the number of collective farms, was a delusion. The peasants reacted in their own way: they slaughtered their cattle, hid or destroyed their corn, or in some cases actually rebelled. The measures taken to "liquidate" the kulaks did not stop opposition; the poor peasants often joined forces with the rich, and the Red Army itself, with its peasant sons, reflected the prevailing restlessness. Then Stalin, in his famous article *Dizzy with Success*, in 1930, performed the *volte-face* that once more seemed necessary. Already in December 1929, in his speech to the Conference of Marxist Agricultural Scientists, he had admitted that, especially as regards rural economy, practical application had run ahead of theoretical preparation.[37] Now he reminded his readers that the policy of collectivization rested according to Lenin's doctrine on voluntary action. While the battle against the kulaks was to be kept up, the poor and middle peasants

were not to be antagonized by being forced to join the collectives. "You cannot create collective economies by force. That would be stupid and reactionary." Lenin also taught, he said, that "it would be the greatest folly to try to introduce collective cultivation of the land by decree." The voluntary principle had suffered injury, the tempo of action had not corresponded to theoretical advances, important intermediate stages on the way to the complete village commune had been by-passed. The Central Committee was therefore arranging, he said, for an end to be made of compulsory methods.

The tussle thus went on, both within the Party and between the central authority and the peasants. In May 1932 permission was granted to the collectives to sell surplus wheat and meat in the open market; at once deliveries to the State fell sharply and the decree was modified to permit free sales only after the delivery of the fixed quotas. Soon afterwards another concession was granted, allowing the free sale of any surplus in vegetables, fruit and such things; and so the system was modified, if not on the central point of the control of the means of production, at least as far as marketing of the produce was concerned. Meanwhile, policy on the main issue continued to move to and fro. In July 1931 the Party Congress proclaimed that collective economies could only be based on the principle of voluntary admission; all attempts to apply force or administrative coercion were "an offense against the Party line and an abuse of power." In the autumn the Commissar for Agriculture once more criticized "the crude and ultra-bureaucratic methods which have been employed towards collective economies and their members." Yet less than five months later, after many peasants, in spite of new privileges offered them, had made use of the greater measure of freedom to leave the collectives, the same Commissar in his Report to the Congress of Soviets adopted a very different tone towards the small and medium peasants who had not joined the collective movement: "Who are they for, for the kulaks or for the collectives? . . . Is it possible to remain neutral today?" The Congress readily supported this attitude. During the next few years new severe measures took the place of the easing up necessitated by the famine crisis, including "confiscation of property and exile." Conditions were now helping the sterner trend. By 1932 the new tractor factories had come into production and helped the collectives to display their advantage over the old methods.[88] Bread rationing was abolished in December 1934, and during 1935 almost all other products were made free on the market. These conditions and events marked the beginning of the fourth stage in the de-

velopment of Soviet economy. In keeping with them nearly 90 per cent of the peasants were collectivized by 1936.

Trotsky had based his attack against the New Economic Policy on two main tenets of Marxism: that private property must lead to exploitation, and that private hold on the means of production was incompatible with the central control that was essential for Socialist planning. When the N.E.P. was expiring, what might be termed the orthodox approach was used for the theoretical analysis of long-term trends and the N.E.P. approach for tactical arguments on the policy to be adopted in the period of transition. The two trends inevitably overlapped and at times were even in conflict with each other. At the Conference of Marxist Agricultural Scientists Stalin had explained, in dialectical terms, why this had to be so. Measurement as to the relation of quantitative and qualitative changes played an important part in deciding questions of Socialist advance or retreat, the nodal point of a decisive turn:[39]

As an example we will consider the transition from the period of merely restricting the kulak to the period of the liquidation of kulaks as a class. Stalin in his speech at the Agrarian Conference gave convincing arguments for believing this transition to be opportune. He contrasted the quantity of wheat produced in kulak farms and in the Socialist sector for the years 1927 and 1929, regarding these quantitative relationships as the index of the qualitative difference in the relation of two classes at the cited periods. In 1927 the relation of forces was such that a decisive advance on kulakism was impossible. The Zinoviev-Trotskyist party, which was at this time declaiming against the kulak, did not understand our unpreparedness for advance. Essentially the measures proposed by the opposition would have led to the policy of "scratching at kulakism," and not to its liquidation. "To advance on kulakism means so to prepare ourselves that 'when we do smite it' it can no more rise to its feet." [40] This preparation was expressed in the Party line on collective farm and Soviet-farm construction. And at last that moment came when the quantity of Socialist wheat exceeded the quantity of kulak wheat; that was the nodal point of the related measurements, that was the moment when it was possible to introduce a qualitative change of tactics. In order to introduce this at the right time it was necessary to determine rightly the measurement of the relations of class forces. The Central Committee of our Party rightly determined this measurement and in 1929 initiated successfully the transition to the liquidation of kulaks as a class on the basis of all-round collectivization.[41]

However correct "dialectically," the practical difficulties remained enormous, and up to the outbreak of war recurring breakdowns in food supplies were met by tightening or relax-

ing central control and administration. This suppleness of approach was possible partly because of the secondary importance the Bolsheviks assigned to the question of ownership. They could afford to make temporary concessions on form as long as central control of production was real. The choice of co-operative methods for agriculture, by way of transition, was not merely a matter of political expedience; it also seemed the most practical way for effective control. Anything was easier than if the State had tried to control a quarter of a million local agricultural enterprises, as it did attempt during the period of war Communism. In October 1921 Lenin himself admitted the mistake made in "our having resolved to take in hand the immediate change-over to Communist production and distribution." He made a still plainer admission a little later: "We must now endeavor to develop a national economy based upon the real psychology of the medium peasant, whose motives and sentiments we have been unable to change in these three years."[42] In agriculture as in industry the first enthusiasm of working for something new and better could not be sustained when things settled down to a tempo of normal activity and production. The Soviets had to fall back on specialists and to give them corresponding rewards. Various means and methods were tried in industry; in agriculture after 1930 the system of the co-operative *artel*[43] was accepted as the most suitable type of collectivization, as distinct from the agricultural commune preferred at first. Lenin in his essay *On Co-operation* recognized clearly the value of the idea for the Socialist transformation of the village; he distinguished lower forms (co-operatives of supply) and higher forms (of production, and collectives). The lower forms played an important part in preparing the ground for collectivization, and the *kolkhoz* was closely connected with Lenin's ideas on the subject.[44] It left its members a measure of private economy in the so-called "household" plots or "home-gardens" and the right to sell what was thus produced in the free market. During the years immediately before the war the Soviets transferred most of the land first organized in State farms (*sovkhozy*) to old or newly established *kolkhozy*. Under this system the peasants were more satisfied, agricultural administration was improved and simplified, while the control of the State was as effective as on State farms.

This did not mean a turn towards any co-operative conception of Socialism. The *artel* type of *kolkhoz* was favored only "for the present," as Stalin said. It was a question of judging the opportune tempo of the transition, and that was a matter of opinion. In the spring issue, 1948, of *Questions of Philosophy*

the theorist C. A. Stepanyan dismissed as "left-wing utopian" those who shortly before the war were urging that all collective farming should be turned into State farms without further delay. More than one Soviet theoretician has, however, made it plain that agriculture would not be regarded as truly socialized until all the *artel* collectives had been replaced by State collectives. Then land, livestock, machines and everything else would belong to the State; the peasants would be laborers working for the State, they would live in large communal settlements enjoying the benefits of electricity and other urban amenities, and then all class differences between proletarians and peasants would vanish—in short, the full flowering of the vision of the Communist Manifesto. Stalin himself has used every opportunity to insist that in agriculture as in industry State enterprise is the higher type of socialized organization; and if co-operatives do not do well, the State does not hesitate to take them over, as it did with the urban co-operatives in 1936. Efficiency is the only test and the only basis for policy. In general co-operative ownership has worked well and has been favored on the land both as regards farming and for village trading, where there is a collective organization to support it.

The *kolkhozy,* it will be seen, were regarded as a compromise between individual and Socialist economies, continually modified and steered in the latter direction. In sharp contrast to industrial workers the *kolkhozniki* still have a personal interest in the market through their so-called "home-garden," which is more than a private allotment as it gives a surplus which they may sell freely. Many of the Party's theorists frowned on these *kolkhoz* markets because they remain "a contradiction between town and country incompatible with Communism,"[45] others protested that "the fewer the attempts of 'Leftists' to exclude" these private plots "the greater will be the confidence of the *kolkhozniki* in the proletariat and their Party, and the quicker will their Socialist education proceed."[46] The State may consider the peasant's "home-garden" and cow and pullets to be merely auxiliary to his work on the collective farm; the peasant himself, and even more so his wife, is likely to consider the second as being auxiliary to the first, a means of getting bread for his family and fodder for his animals. To this day all sorts of advantages and rewards, in goods or honors or medals, have to be offered the peasants as an inducement to put in more work for the collectives.[47] Dr. Schlesinger was merely stating what was to be expected when he wrote that "even where the *kolkhoz* member lived mainly on his *kolkhoz* dividends, his traditional psychology was bound to emphasize the private husbandry. And even if the peasant thought of him-

self essentially as a member of the collective, this collective would hardly mean more than the accustomed village community, now reorganized as a *kolkhoz*."[48] No doubt for such reasons as these, the decree of May 1939 required from the peasants a minimum share in collective work as a condition for continued membership, though even then the share was not set very high.[49] At the same time taxation was weighed against the individual part of a peasant's farming while the extent of the "home-garden" and privately owned livestock was strictly limited. Against this, the *kolkhozy* were pressed to develop collective animal husbandry.[50]

In a way this may have been part of general war preparations, but it also indicated what must be the Soviets' ultimate intention, that only the State or the collectives should supply the urban market, while individual holdings should merely provide the peasants with food for their own consumption. When that happens most of the "dividends" from the co-operatives will come in cash, like the wages of industrial workers. Yet even here there is still a difference for the present. In industry there is an average wage scale for all the workers, but in the *kolkhozy* there is no rule as to how much grain or money a member might earn. It all depends on the results of the harvest, though prices fixed for deliveries to the State may be raised to adjust in a measure results as between various *kolkhozy*, taking into account perhaps the productivity of the particular region or piece of land, bad luck with weather conditions, and so on.[51] From the peasant's point of view this uncertainty of income finds its compensation in the much greater autonomy he enjoys in his community and as a household. This does not mean that he is independent. The State controls the market for agricultural products, it demands certain quantities of produce in kind, and so do the tractor stations in payment for their services—demands which take the bulk of the collective products, as private exports by one means or another formerly took the bulk of the peasant's individual products. These arrangements, moreover, serve at the same time to direct production—so as, for instance, to further according to a central plan the cultivation of industrial plants, of oil seeds, etc. In this way the working and living conditions of the peasants were being increasingly fitted into the system of planned economy.[52] Nevertheless, a certain measure of autonomy remains: the peasants still elect their farm managers and other officials, they are still able to take an active part in discussing the plan of work of their *kolkhoz*, all of which allows the peasants greater scope than the workers in the factories for initiative, for experiment or, for that matter, for stagnation. A recent article admitted that even

in the collectives good results depended on the personal interest of the peasants. "Practical experience with the *kolkhoz* development shows that the more active the participation of the collective farmers in the management of the *artel's* affairs, the more concern they show for guarding and increasing its communal property."[53]

This balancing of control and freedom, reflected in the suppleness of the underlying policy, could never be attributed to any falling away from the central tenets of Marxism. Lenin's readiness to veer and tack was due at bottom to the very fact that he knew where he was going and how to get there. His only important concession to the peasants was dictated by the need of adapting what was originally a western doctrine to an eastern country in which the peasantry formed the bulk of the population. But even this concession bore the mark of a clear and strict consistency. It first took shape at the Stockholm Congress of the Party in 1907, when Lenin found it tactically necessary to retreat from the theoretical idea of large-scale cultivation; he opposed the Menshevik policy of municipal ownership for land to be expropriated from large estates and supported nationalization. He also differed from most of his fellow Bolsheviks, including Stalin, in first opposing the division of land among the peasants, though he afterwards accepted their view. (Stalin was later to criticize himself, in the Preface to the first volume of his *Collected Works*, for having opposed Lenin then and supported the peasant demand.) That view reappeared in 1917, when Lenin took over the program of the Social Revolutionaries and worked it into the agrarian policy of the first Soviet government; and it was carried to its logical conclusion in 1921 with the New Economic Policy. Yet for all this chain of compromises Lenin never gave up the two points that were essential to his ends: that the leadership of the revolution should rest with the proletariat (this, among other reasons, presupposing a policy of industrialization as the condition for a Socialist order); and that the revolution should be carried into the countryside by splitting the peasantry and rousing the potentially revolutionary "poor peasant" against the petty bourgeois kulak. He first, that is, meant to detach the peasants from the upper class and the urban bourgeoisie and then the mass of poor peasants from the minority of rural petty bourgeois. The free hand he allowed the peasants in taking over the land was not a hindrance to this scheme. With the mass of peasants reduced to a state of helpless independence, collectivization became almost a saving and inevitable next step, and so the ultimate triumph of Lenin's agrarian policy.

Lenin's way with objective difficulties was equally revealed

in his handling of the vast network of co-operatives which had developed in Russia before the Revolution. It displayed again his unflinching way of pushing toward the end he had in view, even with what seemed to be strangely vacillating policy. In his pre-revolutionary period Lenin had spoken of the co-operatives which had grown up everywhere in bourgeois society as "miserable palliatives," bulwarks of the petty bourgeois spirit; now he explained that after the abolition of private capital a comprehensive co-operative system "is Socialism." Once in charge of an active revolutionary struggle he made practical use of those he found in Russia, putting them under control or loosening the reins, whichever served his immediate needs, until the time came when they were suppressed altogether, in 1936. Some people saw in Lenin's use of the co-operatives in the earlier period another leaning towards the views of the Populists, who had looked upon such spontaneous forms of communal association as the buds of a coming new society; and only a few months before his death Lenin had sought to give the idea a theoretical basis in an essay on the co-operative system. But all this interest was no more than convenience, and as such inevitably transient. Apart from everything else, the need for centralized organization and control had never wavered in Lenin's outlook and policy. Co-operative schemes may be a means of helping individual members or of starting collective activities as such; in Soviet Russia, no matter what the circumstances, they were allowed to function only in so far as they served the collective trend.[54]

The old rustic Russia, Sir John Maynard has said, lasted up to 1929. After that Marxist thinking, bound theoretically to the industrialization of agriculture, was grafted on to the old Russian village commune which had accustomed the peasants to the communal management of the land; and grafted inevitably under a centralized control which withered that local tradition and experience. Such untoward marginal effects were not material to the ends of the movement. "From the standpoint of Leninism," said Stalin in 1933, "collective farms, and local Soviets as well, taken as a form of organization, are a weapon and nothing but a weapon." And years later, in 1938, in a characteristic passage, he admitted that collectivization had meant a second revolution—"a profound revolution . . . equivalent in its consequences to the revolution of 1917. The distinguishing feature of this revolution is that it was accomplished *from above,* on the initiative of the State, and directly *supported from below,*" by the peasants who took a hand in the anti-kulak movement.[55] Viewed in this light, the apparent vacillation in policy is revealed for what it was: a series of tactical,

temporary moves meant only to further in the long run the final end of complete collectivization.

The struggle for collectivization provided in Russia the main occasion for argument on Marxist philosophy, both against right-wing opponents of the policy, with their "materialist" concern for objective difficulties, and against leftist adherents of the pure Marxist prescription.[56] Lenin's versatility was bound to put a strain on their beliefs. For successive generations of Marxists the Communist Manifesto and its arguments had been not a plea for revolution but simply a prediction as to the inevitable way in which it would come about. There is a neat illustration of that faith in a passage by an English Marxist, written while he was still sowing his theoretical wild oats. Referring to the statement of Engels on the dialectical development of land property—quoted on page 42—the writer had this to say about it:

> This passage, let us not forget, was written just half a century before the collectivization of the land of Russia. It was written while the breakdown of the early, primitive, common ownership of the Russian land into individual holdings (which was not quite completed till the revolution itself) was still going on. Yet it foretold, with an accuracy which would be uncanny if it had not been based upon a scientific, observed law, what has now occurred. For how could the present collectivization of the land of Russia be more accurately and vividly described than in these words of Engels? . . . It is upon this ability to foretell the general direction of historical development that dialectical materialism bases its claim to proved validity. I cannot resist the conclusion that this claim is now established.[57]

The political syllogism would seem to work out something like this: Marx and Engels on dogmatic grounds prescribed certain forms as right for the organization of agriculture; Soviet Marxism on political grounds exterminated several million peasants in the process of imposing by force, and with much loss and suffering, whatever the possible future benefits, the scheme of things assumed by Marx and Engels to be right; our author then points with awe to that correspondence between historical prediction and political event. It does not prove that Marx and Engels were wrong, certainly not that they were right. It only proves the consistent dogmatism of Marxist argument and attitude on this subject.[58]

The question of the conflict of interest between town and country in capitalist society was a recurring theme. The contrast reached its climax when the division of industry and agriculture was carried to extremes; the rate of progress in industry had been much higher, leaving agriculture far behind,

partly due to the ground rent, partly to industrial monopolies. Socialism, however, is able to resolve the conflict by eliminating exploitation and speeding up the technical structure of farming. "The great importance of collective farms," said Stalin to the Conference of Marxist Agricultural Scientists, in 1929, "lies in the fact that they are the basis for introducing machinery and tractors, for transforming the peasant, for transforming his psychology in the spirit of proletarian Socialism."[59] A statement by the Seventeenth Party Congress, in 1932, put this in concrete terms: "The conditions for the necessary elimination of the contrast between town and country will be created through the thorough collectivization of agriculture, the creation of State and collective farms with the newest mechanical means, the improvement of communications and the rising exchange of products between industry and agriculture."[60]

As to the results of this Soviet policy, undoubtedly one of the more important is that it has approached that civic uniformity which is a central principle of the Marxist scheme of society. In this the Soviet success was without precedent. In former radical and other revolutions, including the French, the groups which together made the revolution split apart when it came to building up the new society. For the Soviets, therefore, the test of success lies essentially in their ability to keep the two main sections of workers together—that which on the eve of the war was still the stronger numerically and that on which the whole of the new development rests and which is still in pressing need of reinforcement. This was not often said openly, but it was said by Rykov, Lenin's deputy, in his address to the Congress of Trade Unions in the autumn of 1922; and given the circumstances, it was said with what can be described only as cold-blooded frankness. Russia had been through a terrible famine; that year's harvest had risen well, however, to 60-70 per cent of the normal, but Rykov saw in this a "danger" which "threatened" the working class. "The danger is," he said, "that agriculture is able to recover much more quickly than our industries. One good harvest tends to turn the general situation in our Republic in favor of the peasants as against the workers. Two or three consecutive good years will result in the economic position of the peasants outstripping by far that of the working class."[61]

One way to prevent such discrepancy was to balance and unify the general structure of the two main fields of production. Industrialization and collectivization were thus as much political as economic instruments:[62] from making up three-quarters of the population in 1927 the peasants made up only

three-fifths by 1935, and the proportion must have changed still further by now. Not only have the proportions of the two sections become more balanced, but factory worker and peasant have also been brought closer together socially. There are still differences, as seen in the individualist elements of the *kolkhoz*, which the peasants clearly value highly but which the State is trying to reduce. Yet in many ways the *kolkhoz* peasant is much more akin to the worker in State factories than were the peasants of the middle twenties, with their stubbornly individualist kulak nucleus.

But the struggle has not been easy, and the battle is not won, either practically or theoretically. Among other evidence of the strain which the agrarian problem put on the Soviet regime was the publication since 1925 of the special review *Na Agrarnom Fronte* by the Communist Academy of Moscow—not only in the martial title but especially in the nature of its contents. Few of the articles dealt with technical matters, most of them with social-political aspects of agrarian relations under various forms of agricultural organization and in the several parts of the U.S.S.R. (and also in various European countries and in America).[63] Altaisky's article on *The Elimination of Class Differences between Proletariat and Peasantry*, in 1932, put the issue plainly: "The Socialist re-education of the peasantry is a matter of stubborn, prolonged and acute class struggle," which will inevitably become sharper in "particular sectors, periods and areas." The entry of 60 per cent of the poor and medium peasants in the *kolkhozy* was a great stride forward as they were henceforth cut off from private means of production, with the following consequences: no more kulaks could rise out of their group, nor could they themselves be differentiated any more into poor and middle peasants and landless laborers; they would not exploit or be exploited; the medium peasant was turning into an active supporter of Socialism; it was becoming possible finally to end all inequality among them—though Altaisky added that the notion of complete equality derives from primitive "peasant Communism," not from Marxism.[64] Yet deep class differences between proletariat and peasantry still remained; to eliminate them altogether agricultural means of production would have to be owned completely by the State, not by co-operatives, though meanwhile the *kolkhozy*, and with them the class differences, had to remain. "The entry of the peasant into a *kolkhoz* does not make him a Socialist . . . he has yet to start becoming one. In this respect we have an immense and laborious task, which we must solve, come what may."[65]

This gives the measure of the advance that has been made

towards social cohesion between the two groups of workers and peasants. In contrast with the earlier neglect or complacence, of which Lenin complained, in recent years the Communist Party has been at pains to indoctrinate the peasants, and in some parts, as in the Ukraine, a majority of the collectives now have a party organization in their midst.[66] So much is the deliberate effect of the policy of obliterating the peasant as an individual owner and producer. It has had, however, another fortuitous result, and the effect of this on the complex of Soviet society is not easy to assess. Even Dr. Schlesinger, though careful to write with understanding of the ruling point of view, was led to suggest that "whatever field of Soviet policy you examine, the specific weight of the peasant interest, since the collectivization, has increased."[67] And that not because Stalin had in any way betrayed the workers, but just because he had been successful in collectivizing the peasants. Collectivizing them has also meant organizing them; and binding them into a common agrarian system has also meant giving them a common group interest. The price of that success has been that whenever a measure of compromise was possible the State had to make it favorable to the peasants, in so far as it could do so without sacrificing the foundations of the new society. Whereas, to give one example, the original electoral system had allowed the industrial workers a privileged position, the 1936 Constitution by granting equality of civic rights to all was essentially a concession to the peasants, and perhaps a recognition of their growing self-confidence.[68]

Yet with all the concessions the Soviet regime clearly is something very different from the ideal nurtured by the old Populists and Social Revolutionaries, namely, a peasant society ruled chiefly by a peasant movement. Perhaps the fate of the Samara Constituent Assembly, of Bulgaria under Stamboliski, and other such instances, may suggest that a peasant political system is all too vulnerable to counter-revolution. Perhaps in a backward peasant country only a dictatorship like that of the Bolsheviks could have prevented such a debacle after successful revolution. It might also be claimed for the Soviet regime that, whatever the means employed, it has at any rate been able to bring peasants and workers of various national and racial groups into a common working society. Certainly one test of its ultimate success will be its ability to hold the two groups actively together, without continued resort to forcible methods. But even so, that would still leave open the question which worried the early Russian Marxists—whether Russia could not have developed into a Socialistic commonwealth without resort to the class war, by following the Populist ideal.

PART THREE/THE PEASANT REVOLUTION

Chapter 8

The End of "Neo-Serfdom"

WRITING IN 1888 the French historian Leroy-Beaulieu foresaw that in the patriarchal orthodox East "a Russian revolution might be the greatest historical event since the French Revolution, being in a way its counterpart at the other end of Europe."[1] Indeed, the repercussions of the Russian Revolution in the neighboring peasant countries were perhaps as much a social milestone as was its effect on Russia herself. Nationally the eastern countries were very mixed—Slavs, Magyars, Rumanians; they differed in their history and in their political and cultural attachments, but taken as a whole their outlook and aspirations were western and had less affinity to Russia than to any other cultural center. Yet the whole region always felt the tremors of every social disturbance in Russia—not of her conspiratorial plots, but of the stirrings of her masses —because in all of them the core of the social problem was the peasant problem. Western writers have always stressed national and political differences in south-eastern Europe but have paid little attention to the factor of social affinity, though it was the more pertinent of the three. The unity, indeed the uniformity of the peasant problem bound these countries to an identical historical destiny. Even the abortive Russian Revolution of 1905 stirred the embers of peasant restlessness; the fierce Rumanian rising of 1907 followed close upon it, and the Revolution of 1917 shook all social foundations throughout central and eastern Europe. War and defeat, of course, played their part in this, but the effect was not different in the countries that were on the winning side. The hardened nationalist temper again had something to do with it; in the new state of Czechoslovakia, or in newly acquired provinces—like Transylvania, Bessarabia, Croatia, the Vojvodina—the landowners often belonged to a different nationality from the mass of the peasants and so were likely to lose their estates when their national group lost power. Yet in this respect too the changes were as drastic in the parts where rich and poor belonged to the same nationality, as in old Rumania; and in Rumania and

elsewhere radical land reforms were in fact promised or decreed before the end of the war and the new territorial settlement.

There is enough evidence from some of the countries concerned to show that the reforms were hurriedly brought forward for the very purpose of staving off revolt. In Rumania and in Poland the Ministers in charge of the original enactments afterwards criticized them or tried to slow them down. Tocqueville once suggested that the difference between the English and the French aristocracies in the revolutionary period was that the first gave up privileges so as to retain power, while the French tried to keep privileges and power and lost both. In most of the eastern countries, it might be said, the ruling landed class hastened to give up the land so as to retain power, the exception of Hungary merely proving the point. Hungary had perhaps a higher proportion of agricultural land in the hands of large owners than any other European country[2] and power there fell early to the only Communist regime outside Russia, that of Béla Kun. But Kun did not let the peasants take the land, intending to apply to it the Marxist program and nationalize the land and collectivize agriculture. The upshot was that he neither won the support of the peasants nor checked the power of the landed class. Reaction came more quickly and strongly in Hungary than anywhere else, showing how sound had been Lenin's argument that while the revolutionary division of the land was not Socialism, it was the best weapon wherewith to break the hold of semi-feudal ruling classes in eastern Europe.

Beyond doubt, therefore, the revolutionary eastern reforms were set going by the Russian Revolution, but it is interesting to speculate on what would have been their general trend had the first Russian Revolution not been superseded by the second, the Bolshevik Revolution. On the same occasion in 1921 when Lenin ruefully confessed that they had failed in those three years to change the outlook of the medium peasant, the Commissar for Agriculture, Ossinsky, explained what happened. "When the villages succeeded in getting hold of the landlords' property, they turned a completely deaf ear to ideas of Socialism and resolutely opposed any idea of a commune." Unlike the other eastern countries Russia still possessed a strong communal tradition, yet in 1917, as in 1789 in France, the peasants entrenched themselves on their new properties and remained suspiciously on guard against the urban revolutionary regimes. The first draft of the Rumanian reform proposed handing over the land to village communities—for technical not for socialistic reasons—but the peasants would have none of it. Had the

Russian change been tempered with some more congenial co-operative arrangements, the odds were that the neighboring movements would have followed its lead more closely. As it was, the sum total of these reforms in regard to ownership and production turned out the very antithesis of the Marxist ideal. To Lenin at least this could have been no surpise. He had forecast it in 1907 in *The Agrarian Program of Social-Democracy,* when with malicious scorn he derided the expectations of the Populists: "A favorable outcome of the agrarian revolution which to the *narodniki* would seem the triumph of Populist socialism, would really be nothing other than its sudden and final bankruptcy. The more decisive and complete the success of the peasant revolution, the more speedily will the peasant transform himself into an independent capitalist farmer and wave good-bye to the socialism of the *narodniki.*"

The peasants were not likely to feel more drawn to the Socialism of the Marxists. In such a primitively agrarian region revolution could have no more proximate meaning for them than the satisfaction of their hunger for land. That is how the Russian peasants understood it, and so it was understood by the landed ruling class in the neighboring countries. Though achieved without bloodshed the land reforms which followed the First World War amounted even outside Russia to a social revolution. They were indeed a three-fold revolution—social, economic and political. They did not merely redistribute property, they abolished the class of large landowners altogether; while protecting the peasants in their new freeholds, they set a low limit to the amount of land anyone might own in the future. The change in the division of the land also brought with it considerable changes in the use of the land, as the eastern peasants preferred a system of mixed farming for their own subsistence to raising staple crops for marketing. All that implied at the same time a political revolution: land being the chief source of wealth and power in the eastern countries the loss of one shook the hold of the upper class on the other, and opened the way for organized peasant influence.

The actual reforms varied greatly from country to country, sometimes even in the several parts of the same country, depending on the size of the former estates and on the pressure for land. The general way was to fix a maximum that might be retained by the large owners, something around five hundred acres, and distribute the rest to the peasants, either as new holdings or as additions to the smaller holdings, the average grant amounting to about two and a half acres per household. As many landless laborers were thus made into smallholders and the poorer peasants were given more than the others, while

in most places there was little arable land left from which the richer peasants could increase their holdings, the general tendency—unlike Stolypin's reform and similar measures in the West—was an over-all leveling of peasant properties[3] Altogether over twenty-five million acres were redistributed, about the equivalent of all farmland in England and Wales. In Rumania, the first of the eastern countries to act, where estates had run into tens of thousands of acres, a radical reform was enacted in 1918 while her Parliament was still in refuge at Jassy. It took away everything beyond a maximum of twelve hundred and fifty acres in the old kingdom, and beyond two hundred and fifty in the new provinces of Transylvania and Bessarabia; altogether some fifteen million acres were thus broken up, the area covered by peasant holdings rising from 58 to 88 per cent of all arable land. Yugoslavia had large estates only in the new provinces of Croatia and Vojvodina, where the owners had been mostly Austrian and Magyar, and in a smaller measure those in the hands of Moslem landlords in Bosnia; and Czechoslovakia broke up the many large estates of Austrian and Magyar aristocrats. In these parts, as in Transylvania, the reform took on a nationalistic tinge.

At the other end of the range Bulgaria, like Serbia, had no large property; to find land for landless peasants the reform took everything above seventy-five acres from owners who farmed themselves and everything above twenty-five acres from those who did not. By 1926, to illustrate the effect, 80.6 per cent of all peasants owned their holdings, 16.8 owned some but rented additional land, and only 2.6 rented all the land they cultivated; but after the counter-revolution of 1923 Bulgaria had made the peasants pay heavily in cash for any land received through the reform. In Poland, as Professor Bujak bluntly admitted, the Diet passed a bill in great haste when the Bolshevik armies were approaching, but after victory the ruling group held back again and all idea of radical reform was definitely shelved after Pilsudski's *coup* in 1925. Between 1921 and 1937 some six million acres were divided up, a relatively small amount in a country so large and with so many large estates. Hungary alone of the eastern countries did hardly anything with her many large estates—less than a million acres had been distributed by 1938, in average holdings of about two acres—and found a way of turning the little she did to reactionary purposes. The Horthy regime did create some new smallholdings, mainly in the frontier regions, but in return the new holders were bound to render a kind of feudal military service "if social order were threatened."[4]

The literature describing and discussing these reforms is extensive and varied, friendly or critical according to the writer's standpoint or his understanding of eastern conditions.[5] Here we are interested only in the historical trend they represented and in their broad effects, in what they meant for the eastern peasants socially and politically. Historically speaking no other effect of the First World War in the eastern half of Europe compared in either extent or intensity with the sweeping expropriation of land property. On the European Continent wealth in the form of land became rare and was by way of becoming extinct. Moreover, this expropriation, unlike anything similar in industry, meant a change not only in ownership but also in production. But the war and its aftermath acted merely as a sharp solvent to a state of things in which many elements, economic and social, were already working a change. Ideas of property, among the most stubborn of all social canons, had been changing fast since the turn of the century. "There is no doubt," wrote Duguit, "that the view which regards property as a subjective right is being replaced by a conception which regards it as a social function."[6] Theoretically this change of outlook had gone further in regard to land than to other forms of property, social philosophers continually pointing out that land should be owned by all because no one had created it by his labor. In practice, however, the new view on property was more extensively applied in the industrial field because the many brutal features of the Industrial Revolution provoked increasing public control, and the organized pressure of the workers helped to spread it. On the land the emancipation of the peasants—in Austria and Hungary after the revolutions of 1848, in Russia in 1861, in Rumania in 1864, and so on—while abolishing feudal servitudes, in every instance rather brought more wealth and influence to the great landlords. Emancipation was therefore largely a part of that complex of measures through which *laissez-faire* was introduced into economic life. By contrast, the reforms set going by the First World War and the Russian Revolution belonged rather to the trend which was giving the State a controlling function in the economic and social fields.

In agriculture this change in social outlook came to be reinforced by practical needs. The crisis caused by the expansion of corn-growing overseas seemed to give full support to Proudhon's plea that the man who tilled a piece of land should also own it. The whole history of land tenure seemed to suggest that whenever it was desired to raise the standard of cultivation an effort had been made to link together more closely the tiller

and the soil. Only intensive agriculture could extract from Europe's old soil returns capable of withstanding the competition of the virgin lands across the seas, and intensive agriculture on a large scale and with paid labor rarely proved remunerative. For the sake of production the trend since the last quarter of the nineteenth century had been towards breaking up large estates and as we have seen, many experts, even among Socialists, accepted that as inevitable. This formed the central idea of all the agrarian reforms passed in Europe before the First World War, but on the whole they had been few and limited. In countries like Germany and Austria, and especially in all the eastern countries, the landed class retained sufficient political influence to obtain favors from the State by means of which they could continue to profit from extensive agriculture and at the same time ward off the pressure of the land-hungry peasants. Nevertheless, agricultural practice seemed to move increasingly away from the industrial trend, and the new reforms brought that difference to a head. Security of tenure for the small peasant farmer was the *leitmotiv* in all those agrarian measures, but with this went a new and characteristic social principle. The farmer was to be made secure in his tenure, but the secure tenant was expected to be a good farmer. Hence the distribution of land to smallholders was accompanied everywhere by new definitions of property in terms of its social function. Articles 153 and 155 of the Weimar Constitution, for instance, laid down these fundamental principles: "Property obliges. Its private use must also serve the best interests of the community." "The use and cultivation of the soil is a duty of the landowner towards the community."

Certain features of the new reforms at the same time showed clearly that their mainspring was political. The nineteenth century reforms in the West were part of the general change in economic organization, but everywhere, even in Russia, they were also pressed forward by the monarchies so as to curb the power of aristocratic landlords over the peasants. In the countries of south-eastern Europe, however, after the wilting away of Turkish domination, the landed class *was* the central power; there was no middle class to balance it, while the imported foreign dynasties were too new and insecure to have the authority to check it.[7] Hence with every release from foreign domination the power of the landed class was apt to increase, and so were the burdens laid upon the peasants. It was that political class supremacy that made it possible to continue a servile system well into the twentieth century, and it was the snapping of that supremacy through war and revolution which opened the way for the new reforms. In Rumania and elsewhere outside Russia,

the War had not otherwise dislocated the country's economic and social organization and there was no organic reason for the break-up of the feudal-agrarian foundations, had its chief beneficiaries been able to preserve them. Small groups among them were moved by a genuine wish to give the peasant justice at last, but the forceful efforts their class made later to reentrench themselves on the heights of the State, so as to retain as administrators the power they had lost as landlords, show how abnormal had been the granting of "land and liberty" in 1917.

From whatever angle one regards those reforms it is their social aspect that stands out as a revolutionary change which altered the character of central and eastern Europe. No doubt in some parts the change received an additional impetus from the fact that the bulk of the landowners was not of the same nationality as the mass of the peasants—a point often raised against the reforms—but the results were not different where the landed class was autochthonous, as in Russia or in old Rumania. They could be delayed in Poland and in Hungary because fear of Soviet Russia in the first and the experience with native Communism in the second helped the ruling groups, with the support of western governments, to keep control of power for a time.[8] But in general the range and character of the reforms, taken over the whole period, were determined not by national but by social relationships. However consonant with economic needs, philosophic creeds, or at times nationalist prejudice they may have happened to be, they were first and foremost a tremendous social upheaval. The social effect on the land was sudden and radical. The erstwhile feudal landowner was replaced by what in the West would be a medium farmer, by origin perhaps a peasant, merchant, or aristocrat. The reforms did not create a new class but they strengthened enormously the ancient peasant class everywhere. In many parts the long dominion of the aristocracy was wiped out, while millions of poor sharecroppers and landless laborers were given a new status as formally independent peasants, even if economically many were no better than dwarf owners. Broadly speaking, these measures therefore marked the approaching end of the landed class on the European Continent, and in the East not the rise of capitalist farming but the triumphant emergence of the peasants.

The several reforms, as we indicated briefly, represented different stages in these two results—from the extinction of large property in Russia to its limitation in varying degrees elsewhere. The pitch of each reform was largely determined by the

state of things it had to correct, by the degree in which agrarian conditions had been arbitrarily held back. Where as in central and western Europe preferential measures had deflected the working of economic factors in favor of the large owners, relatively mild reforms were enough to redress that bias in policy. But in eastern Europe, where the landowners had retained a feudal hold on the social and political life of the region, only changes of revolutionary reach could bring that state of things to the level of the more advanced part of the Continent. The function of the eastern reforms was nothing less than to complete at long last the demolition of feudalism begun in the West by the French Revolution. The French had utterly done away with agrarian feudalism within four years; in western and central Europe it took over half a century of gradual erosion before it collapsed; but in eastern Europe it remained almost untouched until war and the Russian Revolution brought it down as in an earthquake.

The main post-war reforms were, therefore, in direct line with the great nineteenth century measures which emancipated the peasants. The two groups formed part of a continuous movement, only now completed; yet the differences and even contrasts between the two served to reveal the startling change which the position of the peasant had undergone in the interval. The earlier reforms were in the main the achievements of the new Liberalism of the urban middle class, moved by economic and political motives of their own, by the general factors that were transforming the whole life and outlook of that period. Their humanitarian philosophy deprecated all restrictions on personal liberty; constitutional government demanded the equality of all citizens before the law; and the new economic creed required freedom of movement for labor and capital alike. The peasants themselves played only an indirect part in that emancipation and derived only indirect benefits from it. In our time, on the other hand, the reforms, pressed forward by the peasants themselves, have run rather against the general social and economic current and have certainly taken no account of economic conditions and needs. One of the chief results which the middle class expected from the earlier emancipation of the peasants was the release of a flow of labor and of cheap foodstuffs for the expanding industrial centers. The new reforms by giving so many peasants a fresh chance on the land have tended rather to reduce the supply of labor, and that just in those less developed countries which aspired to build up an industry of their own, and to reduce in a measure also the supply of food to the towns.

The two groups of reforms show as many contrasts in their character as they do in their background. The main features of the nineteenth-century measures were, for the peasants, of a negative character. They were freed from feudal servitudes but had to pay compensation in either a lump sum or taxes, and also they generally lost some of the land which they had formerly farmed. In eastern Prussia, for instance, a large rural proletariat came into being only after the emancipation, an effect which gradually had to be remedied by successive measures for closer settlement. Things have turned out differently in the twentieth century. Whatever privileges the landlords enjoyed have been utterly swept away. They lost their land without any compensation or with at best a nominal one—in Rumania it worked out at about 3 per cent of the market value of the land—while the peasants received most of the land free or on easy terms. If under the earlier measures the peasants were the losers, real benefits were reaped by the landlords: their estates were freed from servitudes in a period of expanding corn trade and rising values, transactions in land were made free and the way opened for the concentration of landed property. The new reforms well-nigh ruined the landowners and finished them as a class, as they contained provisions which restricted the sale of land and so barred the way to any fresh accumulation of large private estates, while at the same time everywhere raising the peasants' status and prospects. Any social differentiation on the land could thereafter develop only within the peasant class.

The gulf which separates the two related groups of reforms becomes especially clear when one compares the more extreme incidents in each of them. It is true that the Russian Revolution which released the spring of the new land reforms was the eastern counterpart and complement of the French Revolution, but the span of time separating the two events explains the great change in their positive effects. Both of them were milestones in the social progress of Europe, marking the successive breakdown of feudalism West and East, and in both of them agrarian problems played a decisive part.[9] But one occurred at the rise of the Industrial Revolution, with its impetuous unchaining of the forces of production and trade which opened the gates to free enterprise in every field; the other stood rather on the threshold of a social revolution which is as impetuosly pressing forward the problem of distribution, with all the controls involved in it.[10] The one, though helped by the masses, was in the service of the urban middle class: during the French Revolution land was sold to the peasants

merely as a means of securing revenue, and it was divided into smallholdings only as an afterthought and as an adjunct to the party struggle. The Russian counterpart turned out a revolution for the peasants, while the share of the apparently dominant urban class was secondary and incidental. Nothing conclusive could be proved by comparing the professed Jacobin individualism of the first with the professed Bolshevik Communism of the second. As a French writer has pointed out, the Jacobins who claimed to defend property and threatened with death those who propagated the "agrarian law," that is the Communists, had in fact requisitioned, confiscated, and expropriated.[11] The Bolsheviks proclaimed the extermination of individual property, but in effect contributed at first to its enormous expansion and consolidation in Russia and in the neighboring agrarian countries.

All things considered, therefore, the French Revolution in the West and the Russian Revolution in the East were two vastly dissimilar specimens of the same genus. The old worlds which the two of them demolished were alike, but there was little in common between the new worlds to which each gave birth. Both put and end to aristocratic rule maintained with the revenue of feudal estates; but whereas the first prepared the way for the rise of the capitalist middle class, the second heralded the rise of the working class. As the new movement burst forth in the agrarian region of Europe, the difference between the two events was best seen in their effect on the peasant. The first did no more for the peasant than release him from his servile fetters, the second raised him to a new status and gave him a prospect of power. But this very circumstance has also had a secondary social effect which in the East, at any rate, was both vital and significant. It gives indeed the key to the local situation since 1917. Revolution and reforms there had a broad working-class character when taken together, but "proletarian" revolution and peasant reforms also had distinctive sectional characters of their own. Formerly, as in 1848 in the West and throughout the long revolutionary period in the East, the towns were glad to have the villages behind them in the struggle against feudalism or autocracy. The recent changes have swung the pendulum back, however, towards the countryside, the former alliance gave way to an acute antagonism in political and economic issues, and hardly less in the social field, taken in its widest sense. The events which gave their chance to the two ideological trends adumbrated before also brought them into active competition with each other, and the line of division and conflict moved from the village close to the boundary which separated country from town.

Chapter 9

Not Capitalism, Not Socialism

THE AGRARIAN reforms enacted after 1917 took the general system of land tenure in eastern Europe far from the Socialist idea of concentrated public ownership and instead made the whole region overwhelmingly one of small individual peasant holdings. Their effect on the organization of production was equally distant from the Marxian purpose, but not in the way or for the reasons assumed by various western critics of the reforms, who believed that the breakup of the large estates meant a change from large-scale to small-scale farming. That was rarely true. The perverted social evolution of those countries had been reflected also in the ways of their agriculture; even when they came to have a substantial corn export this did not result from the spread of "capitalist" farming. Sometimes the accumulation of large estates served only to take them out of cultivation, their rich or aristocratic owners turning them into sporting estates.[12] But in any case, at the turn of the century in Rumania, to give one instance, while the peasants were crying out for land only some 40 per cent of it was in cultivation. In the same country properties over two hundred and fifty acres covering 49 per cent of the total area were in the hands of only 0.46 per cent of all owners; but while they possessed half the usable land these large owners had only one-tenth of the draft animals and less than one-tenth of the plows in use.[13]

This discrepancy is explained by a peculiarity which lay at the core of the whole system. Of the huge area in the hands of large owners only about one-sixth was farmed by themselves; the remainder was let to peasants or middlemen on leases running from three to five years, which meant that if they made any improvements they were likely to see their rent raised or lose their leases altogether. The middlemen were just middlemen, not farmers; all the equipment they brought with them, the peasants used to say, was a stick with which to drive them. In either case the bulk of the land was worked mostly in sharecropping by the peasants, who provided their own teams and plows and carts and often also the seed. It was more like the system of domestic piece weaving at the beginning of the Lancashire cotton industry than modern factory production.[14] That is indeed why, with a strong popular current behind it,

the change on the practical side was easy in the eastern countries, as both the nominally large-scale farming and peasant farming were carried on with the same means and methods, except for the drive. Estates run as well organized capitalist farms were so few, except in the Vojvodina (Yugoslavia) and in Czechoslovakia, that people knew them by name and they were regarded as "model farms"—in Rumania even on the eve of the recent war there were only some twenty of them—and as such in many cases received privileged treatment under the land reforms.

That the general economic effect of these reforms was likely to be beneficial was admitted at the time, rather surprisingly, even by some of the Soviet experts.[15] As Lenin had indicated years before, the immediate purpose of any agrarian reform was to remove obstacles which stood in the way of capitalist development, both from among backward smallholders and backward *latifundia.* But that was not exactly what happened. Economic changes undoubtedly followed the reforms; they were, however, the result of social not of technical factors. Some western economists simply looked upon the fall in the production and export of cereals as proof of a decline in productivity. Production was bound to fall for a time; the war had caused losses in men, animals and implements, neglect of the land, and human fatigue; and in any case the application of the reforms could not help upsetting things for a while. But these were incidents of the reforms, not necessarily their effects. The real change was not from large-scale to small-scale, from organized capitalistic to simple peasant farming, but rather from farming for the market to farming for subsistence. What distinguished the eastern peasant from the western large farmer or peasant farmer was that to him his land was first and foremost a means of raising food for his family and his animals. His production was accordingly diversified and he took to market only the surplus, or perhaps something more if he were in need of cash. A freer use of their crops or even a larger yield meant first of all a higher consumption among the peasants themselves, who formerly had gone short of food or had been living on poor food. "I used to take my geese to market," was the way a Hungarian peasant put it, "and keep myself on potatoes; now I sell the potatoes and eat the geese." Some investigations undertaken in 1897 by two Russian professors, A. I. Chuprov and A. S. Postnikov, had found already then that "peasants in an economically stronger position satisfied first their own needs before they started producing for the market." That was the natural and immediate effect of the reforms as far as agriculture and its products were concerned. Hence the shift-

ing of the land into the hands of small peasants could not, as things were, bring about a general improvement in supplies for the market or for export.

For the peasants the land reforms proved beneficial even by economic standards. If one looked at trends rather than at particular figures it was clear that the standard of living of the peasants was improving and, generally speaking, so was their production. Nevertheless, it is true that on the whole the outcome of the eastern reforms has been disappointing, but other social reasons, of a somewhat negative nature, were responsible for that. The reforms themselves had little to do with matters of farming; they were never enacted as agricultural reforms but simply as measures for dividing up the land. Even in regard to land there were certain things the reforms could not do. One problem was that of rural overcrowding all over eastern Europe; most peasant families were large, especially in Hungary, the average rural density being estimated at seventy people to one hundred hectares of farming land, when fifty people was taken as the limit of useful occupation.[16] In spite of their sweep the reforms could not give land to all. Again, five hectares was taken in the East as the minimum for a peasant family holding, or one hectare per member, but on an average the reforms could give them only half of that.[17] Moreover, one of the worst and most stubborn features of peasant farming in that region was that many holdings consisted of several scattered strips, especially in hilly regions where each holding included strips of varying quality. The peasants held strongly to the idea that each villager should have a share of the better as of the worse soil, and the necessary give and take was all the more difficult when the peasants had so little confidence in governments and their officials.[18]

All these were bad but also inevitable aspects of the division of the land. They made it all the more important to help the peasants to make the best use of it, to give them not merely the chance but the means to better their own lot and so agriculture in general. The transition had in any case to be a fairly long process, bound as it was to the accumulation of capital, but it could have been much shortened by providing capital from outside. In this the new measures and the policy that followed upon them were conspicuously deficient, and the reason for this offers a further if indirect proof that the land reforms were due to revolutionary pressure, and not to any considered scheme for the improvement of agriculture. On an earlier page we have quoted Chayanov's saying that the eastern statesmen had to look at agrarian policy from the standpoint of population and so had to correct economic-technical with social con-

siderations. That no longer sounds very heretical now; since the depression the general outlook has shifted greatly even in the West towards ideas of "full employment" and "social security." But if that is how the problem had to be seen at all times, how much more was this so under the acute popular pressure which followed the Russian Revolution. Such indeed was the character of the ensuing reforms that to appraise them justly one would have to reverse the order of values suggested by Chayanov: the reforms left the eastern statesmen with the task of correcting not the economic-technical with a social view, but the social with economic-technical considerations. Yet none of the governments concerned, though one might except that of Czechoslovakia, took steps to make the best of the new division of the land. They displayed an astonishing neglect of agriculture and its workers. The new peasant proprietors, except for a small minority, had not the means to acquire animals or implements or fertilizers; they were given neither credits nor guidance to replace the earlier compulsion, and for political reasons the co-operative movement was in most places kept chained to State controls. Improved communications to open up the village were vital, but public funds went into railways and elaborate motor roads while time and again in prolific areas, like Bessarabia, rich crops were left to rot because no transport could be found for them. In Yugoslavia in the early thirties, in a period of many-sided agrarian reconstruction, the yearly public expenditure on agriculture amounted to less than forty cents per head of agricultural population.[19]

On one point all experts were agreed, that peasant farming was not suitable for raising cereals. It was all the more suitable for dairy farming and market gardening, for industrial seeds and plants and similar crops, all of which brought in considerably higher returns in the market. That happened to be the kind of mixed farming which the peasant knew best and which in any case he preferred, as meeting the varied needs of his own subsistence.[20] Yet for one reason or another the eastern countries strove rather to maintain cereal exports. The policy was so unnatural after the division of the land that in Rumania the Government had to offer a bonus for growing corn, while using freight rates and other means to make it difficult for the peasants to divert their new holdings to mixed farming. In general the tendency was to leave agriculture to manage as best it could while granting favors to all sorts of industrial activities. Most of the industrial development depended on foreign capital and loans and these were devoted to heavy and mineral industries, to armaments and such things; in no instance were they directed towards agricultural development, though the

economic well-being of those countries depended in the first place on the strength of the agrarian sector.

There were of course variations between the several eastern countries, but the general traits of that unnatural policy were closely alike in all of them, and there can be only one explanation for that. The dispossessed landed class had to seek refuge in civil and military positions, and in industry, trade and banking, which were pushed artificially beyond the means and the needs of those countries. This could be done only with help from the State, some of it direct but mostly indirect help, which made agriculture in general and the peasants in particular pay for these costly undertakings. At a time when the peasants needed help to organize their new holdings their meager cash resources were instead drained by protective import duties and by taxes.[21] Taxes being difficult to raise, the weight was thrown on indirect taxation; in the thirties this brought in 64 per cent in Bulgaria, in Yugoslavia 65.6 per cent and in Rumania 72.5 per cent of the total tax receipts.[22] After being given land cheaply the peasants were made to pay for it several times over by such indirect means; they escaped the exploitation of the landlords only to fall into the stepmotherly tutelage of the mercantilist state. "The situation which before the reform existed on the land," wrote a Rumanian critic, "where a number of latifundiary owners retained the greater part of the agricultural revenue, has now been transferred to the domain of trade and industry."[23]

Strangely enough, this was actually admitted in an official document, namely in the preamble to the Rumanian fiscal law of 1923. "A state cannot be democratic," it said, "if at the moment when the large rural property disappears it allows a few people to accumulate fortunes from trade and industry, while leaving the mass of the people in the state of the serfs of yesterday, who were unable to share in the benefits of our general prosperity."[24] We have mentioned before the somewhat caustic argument of the Rumanian sociologist Zeletin, that this was the only way to build up a reserve of national capital as a foundation for economic independence. However different the inspiration, the policy, it will be seen, was much the same as that which presided over the forced industrial development in Russia after the Soviet Revolution. At any rate, it is not surprising that with all those faults of omission and commission the eastern land reforms did not provide the start of an economic advance and that agricultural output fell, though the area under cultivation had increased. The economic problem did not enter into their enactment or performance at all and could not stand out highly in their effects. The reforms were a series of revolu-

tionary measures that were left to bear only their immediate and inevitable social results.

That apparent neglect merely covered up the fact that the reforms marked a line of division between two social worlds, the feudal and the modern, and that the old having been demolished, the nature of the new, of the future economic and social organization, became the central issue in the countries of eastern Europe. Two attitudes regarding it were face to face after the land reforms. Economists of the Socialist and classical schools, especially in the West, doubted whether a fair standard of living could be achieved for the mass of the eastern peoples unless industrial outlets were provided for a good many of them. In almost any peasant household one working member, it was said, could have been spared, and that meant that all of them were underemployed.[25] In earlier years the pressure was eased by continuous emigration, but after the depression the overseas countries had checked the flow, and the fear of Communist infiltration was likely to make them close their gates still tighter. For the time being, therefore, the problem could be dealt with only within the range of national policy. Its roots, apart from natural increase, were said to lie in the perverted agrarian conditions. The persistence of large estates or farms deprived many peasants of a chance to have a holding of their own; semi-servile conditions made many laborers redundant, one man being made to work as much land as could have provided a living for three; and women and children were still used too much for agricultural labors. Strip farming, together with extreme climatic conditions, in some parts also held back an excessive amount of labor. Nevertheless, the fact remains that between the wars there was registered in south-eastern Europe an absolute increase in rural population of nearly 30 per cent and hence but a slight decline in its proportion to total population, while there was little land left for subdivision.

While to a certain degree the excess of rural labor was therefore seasonal and technical, it was generally agreed that even a change to intensive agriculture could not find work for all, and that substantial industrial development was necessary for both demographic and economic reasons. But there were wide differences of view as to the kind of industrial policy that was needed, and as to ways and means. The industries set up after 1918 had done little to ease the population problem or raise the standard of living of the masses; they were mostly primary or heavy industries, depending on the interests of foreign investors or on the prospect of substantial profits through contracts or favors from the State, which therefore could establish

themselves and survive only behind high protective tariffs. The whole trend had been haphazard or misdirected, without any regard to real needs and possibilities. One of the ablest eastern economists, Virgil Madgearu, a leader of the Rumanian Peasant Party, had insisted that unlike the old Populists, the Peasants in eastern Europe were not opposed to industrial development as such. "If there is not in Peasantism an inherent tendency against industrial development, it is on the other hand against protectionism, the breeder of hothouse industries, of trusts and cartels."[26] Industries depending on high prices and tariffs and other restrictive measures could not offer an outlet for the surplus rural population.

To serve this essential purpose any new industries had to meet two conditions above all: to produce things needed by the mass of the people and, using native materials in the process, to give employment to as large a number of them as possible. For this reason the Peasant movement wanted industries to be scattered widely in smaller units across the land, to give the peasants additional employment during the slack seasons.[27] All these conditions pointed in the first place to the development of domestic manufactures and processing industries, but in fact these were few and far between unless established, as in Poland, by the peasant co-operatives. The difference between the peasant and the capitalist views on industralization was therefore one of ways and purpose. The peasant way might not relieve rural overpopulation in a direct way by reducing numbers, but they believed that it would insure better use of rural labor and so help in the diversification of agriculture; and it would have been an organic growth at comparatively little cost. Capitalist industrialization, that is large-scale capital goods industries in urban centers, might mitigate rural overpopulation, but the experience of the inter-war period had shown that it could not relieve it greatly; and the accumulation of capital needed for such a type of industrial development would inevitably mean for the mass of the people, that is for the peasants, for many years a still lower standard of living, a standard which as in Russia—though she had the advantage of unlimited supplies of raw materials—could be imposed only by dictatorial methods.

Economists and others who had urged such industrialization by way of solving the social problem of eastern Europe have been apt to overlook that the western industrial revolution would not have been possible had it not been for the existence of less industrialized countries and of newly opened territories, together with the predominance of free trade. Internal markets in the West had been built upon an extensive trade with those

vast external markets. It is true that apart from those directly interested (and leaving aside the special case of Soviet Russia) certain groups in the East favored capitalist industrialization rather for reasons of state, as a foundation for national security and independence.[28] But whatever the end, the means for such an artificial evolution could only come from the exploitation of the rural masses, and the policy was therefore up against the old Populist argument that it was bound to defeat its own ends. An industrial policy which could have no hope of thriving on external markets, and which in the process of growing up impoverished the very people who made up the internal market, was doomed to a hopeless vicious circle, always dependent on the State and all the time corrupting it.

But apart from holding a particular view on the nature of industrial development there is no doubt that the Peasant leaders would have put their faith rather in agrarian development, and that not merely from a sentimental attachment to the land. They firmly believed that this was the only road forward for their countries. In the West the industrial trend had set in before the rural population had increased excessively, and since then any surplus had been continuously drawn away to the towns. Eastern Europe having had no similar industrial expansion in the nineteenth century the bulk of the people had to continue to seek their subsistence on the land; it was too late to change that division of labor altogether; any general social improvement would have to come above all from agrarian improvements. Therefore it was a central question in the argument whether the poor results of the land reforms were due wholly to unnatural political and economic policies. Could the eastern peasants under different conditions build up a productive and prosperous agriculture, as the western peasants had done? A change in general conditions was in their view the crux of the problem, and the Peasant movement, as we shall see, had its answer to this. But even from an economic standpoint the issue was often misjudged by western experts, who looked simply at figures of production and export. The question of large-scale *versus* small-scale in agriculture is a complex one and largely technical; in farming the optimum size (apart from Thünen's "concentric circles") probably varies with soil, climate and, above all, crops.[29] In the context of this essay it is necessary to take a somewhat wider view, and in its light the purely economic judgment would seem to rest on three fallacies —historical, economic and social.

The historical fallacy was to assume that the demand for wheat and other cereals, for "cheap bread," which played such a large part in the French Revolution and in Europe generally

since the industrial revolution, and no doubt influenced the Marxist view, could remain a continuous criterion for judging agricultural productivity and well-being. Corn is undoubtedly grown best on a large scale, but the demand for it is inelastic, and reliance on it in the past has often proved disastrous to European growers faced with the competition of overseas supplies. The eastern growers were only able to keep up with it either by depressing the peasants in a direct way or through economic and administrative favors from the State, like those which the landowners in Hungary could still command in the crisis of the thirties. But even so, though still a country of large estates, by 1937 Hungary's poultry exports had come to exceed her wheat exports. As the wheat market collapsed the eastern countries in fact kept afloat on the buoyancy of their peasant economies. The whole episode threw a peculiar light upon the weakness and the strength of their economic system. Subsistence farming could adapt itself to a precarious situation: the fall in prices led many peasants to eat what they produced rather than take some of it to market, and also to use their spare time in improving buildings and fences, as there was less of the additional work from which they ordinarily raised some ready money; some of the younger folk for the first time could even take off a month or so to attend the peasant schools organized in that period by the peasants themselves. For traders, bankers and others, however, the loss of exports and the shortage of money meant heavy trouble, nor could the State collect taxes from people who had no cash. But the peasants were not affected in that way. It was indeed a paradoxical state of affairs, unfathomable by modern economic theory, when, as one might put it, State and trade were bankrupt, but the mass of the people were better off.

The economic fallacy was to assume dogmatically that the larger the scale the greater the efficiency. Since the great depression doubts about this have grown even in the field of industry.[30] In agriculture it has always been uncertain, and as regards eastern Europe definitely false. The large owners in those parts got better results not because of economic-technical but of political and social conditions. Their farming was profitable on a large scale and with extensive methods only as long as it could command semi-servile conditions of labor; and even in cereal crops the well-established peasants in the Banat and in Transylvania consistently got higher yields than any of the large estates. In Poland the change from extensive corn growing to mixed farming showed great capacity for expansion in that direction,[31] and in Czechoslovakia the division of the large estates resulted in an improvement in the number and quality

of livestock, an increase in milk production and even a rise in corn yields, because more livestock meant more manure.

The social fallacy, finally, was to overlook that the quantities thus made available for export were never a true surplus. Economists and Socialists concerned with a surplus for the urban markets took little heed of how the change to large-scale or capitalist farming affected the village poor; almost always it left those who did the work with an inadequate share of the produce. The Rumanian leaders Maniu and Mihalache asserted that there was a marked difference in the well-being of the peasants between the regions of large- and small-scale agriculture. In the eastern countries the decrease in supplies to the towns meant better supplies for the mass of the people, and was therefore in itself a social advance, even if commercial production and exports lagged.[32]

In recent years, and especially since the war, new social considerations have given even the economic factor an altogether different turn. The emphasis now is not merely on quantity, on having enough food, but on having the right kind of food. The closer and more intelligent interest in social health has revealed a serious and widespread shortage in "protective foods" and therefore a rising demand for them. Even in the United States, as the late President Roosevelt disclosed, one-third of the nation did not get enough of these protective foods; in the agricultural countries of eastern Europe, as stated in the study on *The Economic Development of South-Eastern Europe*, the deficiency was appalling, many villages having no milk at all.[33] Awareness of this need has made the argument as to the best scale for agricultural production appear therefore in a new light.[34] For reasons both of the people's social health and of external trade it would seem that the old eastern system was in any case doomed, and that even if unwittingly the reforms had in fact given a chance to build afresh on the right lines. Whenever it is a question of intensive farming, of personal care of animals, and so on, large-scale undertakings dependent on paid labor must always find it difficult to compete with peasant production in a free market. In spite of the rise of many capitalist undertakings, particularly overseas, specializing in one product or another on factory lines, the support and demand for family farming has continued unabated even in the West.[35]

Besides, perhaps the most important aspect of the matter had almost been lost sight of in the debate about production quantities, namely, the vital need of maintaining the productivity of the soil. That is a need which concerns every country, but not till the shock caused by some disaster, like that in the "dust bowl" of the western United States, had it received the atten-

tion which it merits. Good farming means not only what is got out of the soil but also what is put back into it, to keep it "in good heart and condition." Everywhere, and at all times, experience seems to have shown the same close relation between large-scale farming, especially under tenancy, and the impoverishment of the soil. Even in the United States the policy is now to break up the old cotton lands of the South into small units for mixed subsistence farming, as the best way of redeeming the soil (as well as the health and self-respect of the eight million white and Negro sharecroppers) exhausted by the endless raising of profitable commercial crops. The planter and large tenant often treated the land as an investment, to be used as long as it paid and then sold as scrap: "land is with him a perishable or movable property."[86] Marx, characteristically, had simply laid it down that small-scale cultivation impoverished and exhausted the soil.[87] Yet how could a peasant, who expects to raise generations on the same bit of ground, treat his land otherwise than as a living thing? The virtue of ancient and recent peasant farming, wrote a reviewer in the scientific journal, *Nature,* is that it returns to the soil the elements of life.[88] It may be true that peasant farming does not produce as much as mechanized large-scale farming, but it has never exhausted the soil.

There is a strong element of ideal truth in the old Socialist argument that being God-given, and needed by all, the land should be no man's private property. Yet the land as such would be of little worth unless its bearing powers are perpetuated. It is the function of the land, not its raw substance, that society must possess for well-being and survival, and in that sense the claim to individual ownership may be logically rooted in the nature of agricultural production itself. With the factory worker, even the artisan, the quality of his product depends on the quality of the material and on his own skill. Whatever tools or machinery he uses are a passive factor, taken over as they stand from the previous user and passed on to the next but little affected by their temporary use, or easily replaced, All the variable factors of production, materials and skill, are wholly absorbed in each unit, in each object produced, while machines and tools are transient. With farmer or peasant the matter is very different. His chief tool is the soil itself, or rather it is partly tool, partly raw material, a unique combination in the whole scheme of production. It is unique in that it is both a variable factor, affected by each period of use, and at the same time a constant factor, which cannot be replaced. What the farmer can get out of it depends greatly on the state in which the soil was passed on to him by the previous user, and his own

way of treating it will affect the results obtained by the next user. Neglect of the soil by one may make it of little use for many. Quite apart from immediate benefits, therefore, the very nature and spirit of "cultivation" seem to require that the man who tills the land should have constant use of the same piece of the same instrument.[39]

All one can ask, as the Weimar Constitution asked, is that he who claims the right to such constant use should also be responsible for the constant care of the soil's living qualities. To the peasant such care is a matter of his own survival. Extensive commercial farming reduced even the young soil of America to poverty in the cotton belt and to dust in part of the western wheat belt. Nor did that loss to the soil, and to society, apparently bring lasting advantage to those who by their method of farming had been responsible for it. In the United States even on the land in the great depression of the thirties one-tenth of the farming families were on public relief. Perhaps the key to the peasant's deep attachment to his piece of land, and to the true social meaning of his way of farming for him, lies in these two facts. To own the land and to be free to farm it in the traditional peasant way is to him nothing less than the equivalent of that "social security" which has become the aspiration of industrial masses even in the advanced countries of the West. The lifeline which in the West the State has to throw to the worker whenever he is in difficult circumstances, through the complex of insurances against unemployment, against sickness and want, for old age and so on, the peasant has always found in his traditional economy. As Miriam Beard says in her *History of the Business Man,* discussing his part through many centuries, "men suffered on the land but survived; while in the cities they flourished—and faded." The peasant's way to security may not provide him with such great material benefits as those now given in the West by the State, but it is a security which he can achieve with his own hands and which leaves him free to stand on his own feet.[40]

Social health, social security, the health of the soil, all these new concerns would seem to have brought fresh practical justification for peasant farming.[41] The small farmer no doubt labors under various disadvantages, but experience has shown these to be commercial more than technical. In general, and leaving corn growing aside, he can hold his own in the process of production; it is when he enters the market that he finds it difficult to stand up to the big men. Proudhon had already shrewdly argued that modern communications and distribution would "discipline the market" and prove a safeguard rather

than a danger for the small farmer. The absence of such communications has been a heavy factor in the poverty of the eastern peasant,[42] while the lesson that their chief weakness lay in distribution was gradually learnt by the European peasants as much as by the American farmers. In the inter-war years co-operative marketing was fast becoming an integral part of small-scale farming in the West. Some years ago, under Socialist influence, North Dakota tried a system of State marketing of grain, but it proved a failure; the farmers afterwards found better help in a scheme of co-operative elevators, which received the blessings of the Socialists too.

Elsewhere also the earlier Socialist hostility to co-operative arrangements was giving way to acceptance of a movement which was making headway in spite of them. The Italian Socialist, Gatti, and agrarian expert, had pointed out its special place in agriculture: "Whereas the new technical instrument (that is, concentrated production) has created in industry only one economic current, namely capitalism, in agriculture it has created the capitalist current for the large undertaking and the co-operative current for the small." The Belgian Vandervelde had equal sympathy for it and insisted that even if the agricultural co-operatives had sprung from an anti-Socialist spirit, they "march unwittingly towards the same goal as the Socialist movement itself." Albert Sorel saw in them indeed the best type of mutual organization: "It is on the land, much more than in the towns, that Socialists must go to see examples which can illuminate the notion of association."[43]

All the Peasant parties believed that the shortcomings of small-scale production could be mended by co-operative arrangements. It is not too much to say indeed that they had in mind a co-operative society, equally distinct from the Liberal capitalist society as from the collective society of Socialism. In earlier years co-operative arrangements in eastern Europe were but poorly and unevenly established. In some countries like Rumania, Yugoslavia, and elsewhere, such co-operatives as existed, like everything else capable of giving the peasants a more independent position, never escaped the control of the authorities. In general rural co-operatives were set up mainly for selling purposes and as such could benefit only the relatively small group of peasants who had a sufficient surplus to sell in the main markets. This was true also of the credit co-operatives, which always depended for their funds on help from the State; and anything which was under the control of the authorities was apt to be looked upon with suspicion by the mass of the peasants.[44]

These beginnings, however, fell far short of the part given to

the co-operative idea in the programs of the Peasant movement. Whether conceived as "village co-operation," as by the Croat party, or "integral co-operation," as by the group of Dr. Jovanović, it was meant to serve every need and every aspect of rural life. Technical, financial and commercial, and also insurance arrangements were intended to secure to the peasant farmers the benefits of large-scale farming; social and cultural arrangements were to bring them the advantages which till then had been a privilege of the towns. Especially were they meant to be, as in Croatia, a binding element, to bring the richer and poorer peasants together in the pursuit of their common economic and social interests.

These aspirations found practical expression during the inter-war period in manifold co-operative experiments, though with a few exceptions they were no more than beginnings.[45] Apart from their general neglect of agriculture, the obstruction or interference of those in control often came into play through or against the peasant co-operatives. It was natural therefore that the co-operative trend should have greatest strength where the peasants were best organized politically. In such parts the range and spirit of these activities were impressive, as in the interesting experiment with a chain of village health co-operatives in Serbia.[46] Two other instances well illustrate their social significance: one was the experiment in Czechoslovakia with a direct trading arrangement between peasant dairy co-operatives and urban Socialist consumers' co-operatives; the other, the beginning of an international connection between the Bulgarian and Serbian co-operatives. The two organizations had started active relations on the eve of the war through a joint selling arrangement and later through a joint insurance scheme, to save the high cost of insurance for their transports. They were aiming to establish similar links with the Rumanian and other peasant co-operatives in the hope of drawing the Balkan peoples effectively together by such means.[47]

Many of those concerned with these affairs, especially among the younger and advanced elements, felt strongly that the structure of peasant farming would also have to develop somehow towards some kind of communal co-operation; whether such co-operative cultivation was to be undertaken by the village as a whole or some other grouping was not yet clear, but they expected it to give both the form and the content for a peasant democracy. It was perhaps the only way to deal with the difficult problem of scattered strips without rousing the suspicion or opposition of the peasant owners. Yet even those who believed that co-operative farming was an essential and urgent step, without even the exception of the several left wing peasant

groups, wholly rejected all idea of collective farming on the *kolkhoz* model, because it would mean central control and the loss of peasant initiative and freedom.[48] Perhaps this is as good an example as any of the reaction against Socialist ideas which Soviet methods had caused among the neighboring peasant populations.

Be that as it may, these co-operative activities were managed well and with imagination; in most parts, as in Croatia, special attention was paid to the poorer peasants, like those of the penurious villages in the Karst Mountains of Dalmatia. The co-operatives were meant to have not merely economic uses but to become nuclei of a new civic conception. Some of the leaders considered that "the merging of the functions of universal co-operatives with local self-government might create a special form of administrative body."[49] However experimental, therefore, these attempts were reaching in their purpose and performance beyond anything known or contemplated as co-operative activity in the West, and they gave an inkling of what the Peasant leaders meant when they spoke of a co-operative rural society.

Whatever one may think of the claims of large or small farming, the issue cannot be said to have been tested till general conditions and policy give each kind a chance to prove itself. By itself the break-up of the large estates in eastern Europe could not solve either the peasant problem or the general economic problem. The circumstances which surrounded these extensive measures and the untoward central policy which followed them, in Russia as in the other peasant countries, therefore revived in the East the old and burning question which had provoked the Populist reaction against Marxism: What is the best organization for our people, an agrarian one on peasant foundations or an industrial organization, whether capitalist or Socialist? The irony of the eastern revolution was that the break-up of the large estates into millions of peasant holdings was presided over not by Populists but by those who stood for the industrial solution. They had to put into action a sweeping change that went contrary to their own beliefs and plans, and which afterwards they had therefore to try to reverse all the more forcibly by means of their general policy. For, ideology and program apart, the division of the land had at once two serious consequences for the towns and their industrial plans. For reasons discussed before it tended at first to reduce the supply of food to the towns; it also reduced the supply of labor. In the first spell the chance of getting land provoked a real exodus from the towns. "At present the village," said a Russian

writer, "has absorbed a good half of the industrial proletariat."[50] On both counts, therefore, the land reforms, whatever their inspiration and purpose, raised obstacles in the way of plans for rapid industrial expansion, and in the same measure prevented control of economic policy by ordinary means by either the capitalist middle class or the proletarian working class.

That could be only a temporary effect. It did not touch the heart of the economic problem and left moreover the issue in the political arena. Those who stood for the industrial scheme of things did not adjust it to the new conditions and work to reshape these gradually through economic action. Whether proletarians or capitalists they strove instead to get control of power and then revive their set conceptions by political means. The crucial issue of agrarian organization cannot be said to have been faced at all as an economic and technical problem: for years it was left to fester in Soviet Russia and in other countries left to drift. It was naïve to think, said a Rumanian Peasant leader, that the reform was finished: "everything is still to be done, as far as the work of agrarian development is concerned."[51]

Three ways have been advocated for dealing with the agrarian problem in eastern Europe. (i) Some technical experts and conservative circles urged the creation of "sound" peasant holdings (of the kulak type) of at least ten to fifteen hectares each, on the western pattern. That was the method tried by Stolypin in 1906, and by King Carol in Rumania before the war; in the latter case they were to be of ten hectares each, indivisible by sale or inheritance (The Nazi *Erbhofgesetz* did not allow sale at all) and were to be given only to Rumanian subjects farming themselves.[52] Such a general policy, broadly speaking, would have reduced the number of holdings by some two-thirds, which meant that new fields of work in the towns or through emigration would have had to be found for at least one-third of the rural population. (ii) The Socialist school of economics has not so much advocated as taken for granted the proletarization of the peasants, through the inescapable working of economic evolution. The towns would then take control of economic policy and transform agriculture into collectivized and mechanical large units of production, on factory lines. Whatever else it might achieve, outside Russia this was bound to be self-defeating in that it would have made the crucial problem of overpopulation even worse than under the kulak scheme. (iii) The Peasant view has favored diversified farming in family economies, combined with old and new forms of cooperative integration. Some years ago it was summed up in this

way by Dr. Maček, the present leader of the Croat Peasant Party: "Forty years ago we wanted to preserve and defend the *zadruga* as a unit of production and consumption. The crisis has taught us that this is no longer possible. But it is possible to turn the village into an economic unit. Every peasant holding produces partly for the needs of the peasant family and partly for the market. The part produced for the needs of the family and which never reaches the market should remain the business of the peasant family also in the future. As to the other part, production for the market, the trend of evolution leads towards co-operative production as a common concern of the village as a whole. Where there is a lack of land new possibilities of earning a livelihood must be created within the village, ranging from home industries to village factories. But the peasant's connection with the land must not be severed, he must not be driven from the soil."[53]

This peasant view does not seem very far, in its general idea, from the Soviet agrarian system. Co-operative farming for the market and individual farming for the peasant family's own needs looks closely similar to the *kolkhoz* with its appendage of "home-gardens" for the use of individual members of the collective farm. There is a difference between the two ideas, however, which brings out clearly the deep-seated division between the Communist and the Peasant view of society. In the Peasant conception the whole arrangement would be a co-operative village affair, organized and managed by every village for itself, not one controlled from an urban center in accordance with a centralized plan and imposed as such upon all.

Chapter 10

The Green Rising

"THE GREEN rising is a thing like the great war," wrote G. K. Chesterton in the early twenties. "It is a huge historical hinge and turning point, like the conversion of Constantine or the French Revolution. . . . What has happened in Europe since the war has been a vast victory for the peasants, and therefore a vast defeat both for the Communists and the capitalists. . . . In a sort of awful silence the peasantries have fought one vast and voiceless pitched battle with Bolshevism and its twin brother, which is Big Business, and the peasantries have won."[54] Chesterton of course had a bias of his own against the indus-

trial life and the mass politics of the West, but it happened to be close to the way the peasants felt about them, and for the rest he was by no means alone in his prophetic estimate. Two experienced journalists had asserted a little earlier, from much local observation, that "the peasant, yesterday a serf, is today master of the Central European situation"; but they also pointed out that while "the 'Red' rising is a matter of gravest concern, and from time to time occupies headlines in the newspapers, the 'green' rising, which promises and threatens as much, and is far more active, has created hardly a ripple of interest."[55]

There was much truth in these views, on the evidence of the moment, but the conclusions derived from them were to prove somewhat premature. The peasants were roused, but what were they capable of as a class? Political revolution did not come naturally to them. When peasants rebelled it was against patent abuses; their quarrels had been with their direct tormentors, landlords and local officials, while they had looked upon king and government rather as courts of appeal. They never thought of changing their status except by orderly means and were anxious to make due return for any boon they received. The one thing they had always defended stubbornly was their right to land, but throughout many Balkan journeys one never heard a peasant suggest that they should get land without paying for it, or that it should be distributed by any other measure than the needs of each household. There was in their outlook an innate sense of fairness and also an inbred independence.

Their sense of independence was to find expression after 1919, organized as never before, in a widespread Peasant movement. The movement was active in every country of eastern Europe and, in one way or another, through its own achievements or through the reactions it provoked, it proved the most potent political influence in the life of that region during the inter-war period. This is to put it broadly and generally, for the strength of the movement and of its effects varied considerably from country to country and even in the several parts of the same country—as for instance in Old Serbia and in Croatia; and partly for this reason the movement, both as an ideology and as a political phenomenon, still awaits its historian. But the main traits and activities are clear enough, and using the available material, taken from here and there during that period as illustrations of a trend, it is enough to show why and in what manner the Peasant movement was so sharply contrasted from the neighboring Marxist movement. It should also suffice to make clear why in spite of a large following and

strong convictions the movement failed to establish itself during the inter-war period.

The Russian Revolution had aroused the political consciousness of the peasants and the land reforms had seemingly given them the material foundation for a new start. But new tribulations followed close upon these gifts and led to a struggle which concerned and affected the whole structure of those countries. The peasants of eastern Europe had experienced much frustration in the past, when reforms granted under the stress of crisis had often been whittled away in application. The new land reforms had gone too far, and in most places had had to be applied too quickly, for this to be possible again. After the reforms, therefore, to continue their influence, those who had formerly benefited from agriculture had to find a new place of vantage for themselves. Now the eastern countries might almost have been said to have this peculiarity that, outside agriculture, the state provided more employment than did economic activities. From the time they became independent during the nineteenth century the machinery of government had not grown, as in the West, *pari passu* with the growth of economic life, but was superimposed in all the intricacy of a western system upon an undeveloped agrarian subsistence economy. The eastern countries boasted elaborate and costly bureaucracies and also extensive and still more costly military establishments.[56] Together with various other attempts at westernizing this led to inflated and luxurious capital towns, to much pomp and circumstance amid sordid backwardness, to equally inflated universities when elementary schools were insufficient and technical schools scarce.

While not poor in themselves, therefore, the peasant countries had to carry political and military overheads far in excess of what their economy could bear. The ousting of the landlords had the effect of adding to that urban retinue and so to the needs of the State, and the burdens which had formerly pressed upon the peasants as individuals were now laid upon agriculture as a whole. "It is true," said the Rumanian leader Mihalache, "that today the peasants no longer are the serfs of the great proprietors; that is the only evident progress, and merely a formal one at that. For serfdom has not disappeared; now it is serfdom to the banking trust, which dictates the conditions on which the produce is sold. Free labor, but taxed and coerced trading—that is the modern method of serfdom."[57] With the loss of the land State interference in economic life grew rapidly: prices, trade, imports and exports, foreign credits and to some extent banking were all brought variously under

State control, and that by bourgeois and supposedly Liberal regimes.[58]

Throughout the years the economic process had been inextricably bound up with political evolution and the peasants had been given little part in it. There were no peasant spokesmen, for instance, in Rumania's first constitutional parliament, in 1866, and still no peasant deputies in 1917 when the great constitutional and land reforms were debated at Jassy. But the agrarian revolution after the First World War had been coupled throughout the region with a political revolution. The new states, Poland and Czechoslovakia, were of necessity started upon broad democratic ideas, and the old states also conformed to the current by giving themselves generous constitutional reforms. No doubt the assumption was that, as in the past, once the peasants had got land they would not bother much about anything else. When the final Rumanian land law was passed, in 1921, one of the shrewdest of the old politicians, Argetoianu, exclaimed: "And now the Peasant Party may rest in peace!" But the novelty was precisely that the peasants were no longer willing to leave things to the will and temper of the old ruling groups. The peasants were roused and seemingly had learnt that land without liberty or liberty without land would be but a half freedom, and that to gain both control of power was necessary. From servile supineness to "green rising" was a wide leap, but that was a consequence of the social structure of the eastern countries. Their evolution had not allowed the growth of a substantial middle class; as in the old Tsarist Russia there was nothing between the few rulers and the great mass of the ruled, and while this had preserved the semi-feudal structure, it had also preserved the peasant.[59] Neo-serfdom had sorely exploited the peasant, but a more advanced Liberal-capitalist system might have destroyed him altogether. As it was, this crisis in the region's history found the eastern peasant in the condition in which the English peasant, in the words of the Hammonds, was before the inclosures: "standing in rags, but standing on his feet." If in earlier years the absence of a middle class had left the landlords free to exploit the peasants, it now also left them defenseless against the new current; and so the "expropriators were expropriated."

The sudden rise and success of the Peasant movement frightened the ruling groups as the Socialist movement had never done. It faced them for the first time with a true popular movement capable of making effective use of the political rights written in the constitutions. That goes a long way towards explaining the domestic politics of those countries in the inter-war period, especially the growing cleavage between town

and country. The contrast which Trotsky had marked as giving the meaning of 1917 in Russia was, in a somewhat different way, at work also in the other peasant countries. Far from being a mere party division between Conservatism and Radicalism, the new situation represented rather a deepseated clash of policy between a peasant agrarianism and an urban mercantilism; a mercantilism in which personal and class and nationalist interests were inextricably mingled. Any democratic system was bound to give leading place to the Peasant parties which had sprung up or grown to power after the War. Hence the undermining of the new constitutional rights was if anything more brazen than that of the new land rights. The attack on the latter was generally indirect, but executive and administrative intereference with political rights was open and kept pace with the legislative extension of those rights.[60] As conditions grew worse the peasants became more discontented; as their discontent grew more threatening governments found cause to restrict political liberty. In the end the process led inevitably to one kind of dictatorial rule or another. But unlike Fascism and Nazism in the West, the eastern dictatorships never rested on the support of strong sections of the masses. The villagers especially looked with bland peasant scepticism on the uniforms and parades and oratorical antics of these would-be tribunes. The eastern dictatorships were never anything but bureaucratic and military regimes, as brittle as they were inefficient and oppressive.

Throughout the inter-war period the Peasant parties were thus the chief butt of political malpractices and persecution. Crown, army and the bulk of the urban elements generally found themselves allied in this attack; but perhaps its most unnatural aspect was that the Socialist groups should have joined in it—the only aspect in which the otherwise democratic and progressive Czechoslovakia was like the other countries. The hue and cry was ever against the Bolshevik wolves, but it was the Peasant shepherds who got murdered, like Stamboliski and Radić, or imprisoned and ostracized, like Witos and Maniu and a host of their followers. In one country after another the Peasant groups were in this way cheated of their legitimate claim to power. The process began with Hungary in 1919, continued with Bulgaria in 1923, with Poland in 1926, with Yugoslavia in 1929 and with Rumania in 1931. Alone the Czechoslovak Agrarian Party was able to stay in power, in coalition with others, till 1938; with this exception the democratic regimes, in most cases identified with the Peasant parties, were everywhere ended by dictatorship, though it had to be done in every instance by corruption or force.

In a sense that relentless antagonism was also a tribute to the power and temper of the new Peasant factor. What gave it strength and explained the bitter opposition to it was that it expressed a new creed. It was a creed which threatened the schemes for social organization of both the Right and the Left, and which brought into action masses which until then had been politically dormant. The first spur to the "Green Rising" was simply a political and social revolt against the existing state of things. In this workers and peasants felt alike, moved as they all were by similar social claims and hopes. In political action however, as we have seen, the two groups could not join together. Their division sprang from an old ideological divorce which had hardened into habitual estrangement. They had for so long followed separate political paths, just in the decades when popular movements were taking shape, that they had acquired very different political minds and habits.

The ideological divorce between town and country, together with the local economic shape of things, had produced a parallel regional division in Europe between East and West, though it was of course not clear-cut but rather a matter of emphasis. When the middle- and working-class movements in the West were proclaiming their social ideals and claims the eastern peasants were still in a state of political wardship. Socialism had indeed a set and confident doctrine before it had an organized following. The rousing of the political consciousness of the peasants, even if quickened by western influences, came later and it grew into a movement while its doctrine was still in the making. It is true that long before the new methods of manufacture had gathered workers together in crowded towns the peasants had everywhere fought many a social war, and peasant claims had been voiced in every generation. But these had been sporadic local struggles to break out of the bonds of serfdom, with no conscious social philosophy or scheme behind them. The bonds cut deep, but the wounds were not so evident or spectacular as the festering sores of the new industrial masses, which were distressingly obvious to all on the surface of everyday life. In the West urban wrongs had outstripped the old village wrongs by the time the Liberal conscience arose and was on the look-out for such evils. The hurt done to the peasants by the inclosures and such acts rarely raised an echo in the writings of novelists and poets, as did those which the new "Satanic mills" were doing to the workers; no Dickens cried out against the pangs of the village poor. Nor were country people as easily stirred by general ideas or as easily organized. They did not find it as simple as the workers to fight for themselves or to find champions elsewhere; while the radical move-

ments bent upon putting an end to autocratic or privileged rule through political action, and needing mass support for it, naturally found it more readily among the congested agglomerations of industrial workers.

It was in the agrarian East, therefore, that the new social sentiment and also the post-Napoleonic stirrings of political revolt, whether against foreign domination or national misrule, came to center rather upon the village, especially in Russia, and so led to the ideas embodied in Populism. In the East it was the peasant who almost monopolized the cries of anguish or anger in the literature inspired by social issues. Yet that rising social sentiment could not then find expression in political action. In the region in which Populism was born it could not benefit, like Socialism in the West, from the simultaneous rise of Liberal regimes. The peasants were kept under a rigid political and social tutelage and political activity among them was treated as revolutionary and almost treasonable. Partly for this reason the Populist movement outside Russia remained largely literary and theoretical, or at most incipiently sociological, as in the work of the Poporanist group in Rumania, of Ante Radić in Croatia and others like them; much of it in the south Slav countries being inspired by the pioneering work of Cvijić and his school.[61]

All the more striking was the way in which Peasant parties sprang up in strength in every eastern country after the First World War. Their temper and program varied with local conditions and for a while they had little contact with each other. Hence the unity of their central principles revealed how closely alike were life and problems among the peasants in that area. They were linked by a common need to end feudalism and a common desire to build in its place a democratic society based on peasant ownership. Needs and aspirations which made for such unity also showed how far apart the peasantry of East and West had moved. The radicalism of the eastern peasants, as has already been indicated, was due to the peculiar conditions and history of the region. In the West agrarian parties were a mixture of all rural classes, often with the big landowners to the fore, as in the German *Landbund*. Even in Holland and Denmark the peasant groups had been drawn into Conservative agrarian parties, partly through a rural antagonism to industry and finance, partly through clerical influence, and everywhere because of the bogey of nationalization raised by Marxian Socialism. The eastern parties were exclusively peasant (the large or medium commercial farmers had professional organizations of their own), and as social and economic obstacles had prevented the growth of a substantial peasant middle class, the

movement was carried more uniformly by the mass of small peasants.

The Peasant movement which arose after 1918 was, therefore, peculiar to the eastern half of Europe.[62] Some of the Peasant parties had been founded before the First World War, but they became important only after it. The Bulgarian Agrarian Union was founded in 1899 as a professional body which turned political in 1901 and was swept into power, with Alexander Stamboliski as leader, by a burst of revolutionary feeling after the defeat of 1918.[63] The Czechoslovak Republican Party of Farmers and Small Peasants, founded in 1896, was at first a grouping of farmers and well-to-do peasants with a conservative temper, but after 1918 it veered towards the Left. Under the leadership of Anton Svehla and then of Dr. Milan Hodza it remained till the Second World War the strongest party in the State.[64] Poland had several parties, reflecting a more unsettled political situation; but it was noteworthy that while politically the movement was divided by regional, clerical and personal influences, locally the peasants ignored these divisions and worked together in their co-operative affairs. Leaders like Witos and M. Mikolajczyk have given the Polish groups an outstanding place in the movement.[65] The Rumanian National Peasant Party began with a group hurriedly brought together in 1918, to make use of the possibilities opened up by the Russian Revolution and by the land and political reforms; it remained throughout the inter-war period the only substantial opposition, and in 1928 under Maniu, Mihalache and Dr. Lupu came to power as the first truly parliamentary government in the country's history.[66] In Yugoslavia the Serb Agrarian Party founded by Mihajlo Avramović never gathered political strength, while the Slovene peasants remained under clerical influence; but the Croat Peasant Party founded by the brothers Ante and Stjepan Radić, and led after the latter's death by Dr. Maček, completely dominated the Croat parts after 1918. Largely along the lines of the earlier sociological work of Dr. Ante Radić, it developed a clear rural creed, not merely an agrarian interest, and was as remarkable and effective in its economic and social work as in its political organization.[67] In Hungary, where the peasants were virtually without political rights, even after 1918, various groups under various names tried to appeal to the rural interest, but a National Peasant Party did not come into being till 1939.[68] There were rising Peasant parties also in Finland and in the Baltic States.

It was inevitable in the circumstances in which the Peasant movement came into being that in the early years it should have remained somewhat loose and uncertain, but its poten-

tialities were obvious. There were about a hundred million peasants in the east European countries, excluding Russia, and these formed the solid mass of the Peasant parties; while in Europe as a whole peasant voters greatly outnumbered industrial ones, and of the total world population over half lived in the typically peasant family economy. Essentially the movement was of course agrarian, or it would be more accurate to say rural, but its philosophy was original in a pragmatic way. It did not fit neatly into any of the traditional political doctrines; it was eclectic, not dogmatic, having taken parts and traits from all of them in so far as they fitted the spirit and aspirations of the movement. Its attachment to private property was more staunch than that of any Conservative party; it shared with Liberalism an absolute devotion to democratic government, and also a dislike of excessive state interference with the life of groups and individuals; its social ideals, and also some points of economic policy, were close to Socialism. But all these similarities were held with a difference. The Peasant idea of private property was very different from that of the Conservatives in western "acquisitive society," and the dislike of state interference was equally far from a belief in *laissez-faire*. In regard to land, especially, the peasants believed empirically in a "property of use" long before the idea was worked out theoretically by sociologists or applied practically in some projects and laws after the First World War. Holding such ideas on property in land they were unlikely to approve the unrestricted accumulation of other forms of property. A cardinal point of the Peasant programs was the need to restrict and gradually to eliminate the function and power of capitalist "middlemen"—bankers, traders, etc.; but they wanted this done—as Lassalle and the first German Socialist party wanted—through co-operative action, the axis on which their whole economic thinking revolved, and not the Marxist way through wholesale nationalization.[69] State ownership and control they accepted for essential public services, for primary industries like mining, which merely exploited the country's natural resources, and also for some of the large mechanized industries. The co-operative idea was favored, that is, where the work of the individual counts, public ownership where he is only a cog in a machine of service or production.

In its general view the movement naturally had a bias towards a rural society, towards "an agrarian system based on the peasants' own labor and private ownership, restricted by public interest." The small family holding was to be its foundation because they looked upon it not merely as a means of living but as a way of life.[70] They did not believe that national

life could be fashioned to suit the bourgeoisie and a few prosperous peasants, but that it must be based on the interests of the great mass of the people, the small peasants and the industrial workers. The movement was definitely in favor of the organization and protection of the workers, and of the provision of equal opportunities for all; most of the parties advocated a share for the workers in the control and profits of industry. They showed generally a preference for direct, proportional taxation, but demanded equality between town and country not only in the raising but also in the spending of public revenue. In economic and social principles, in short, those Peasant programs might be described as an eclectic combination of the instinct of Liberalism with the ideals of Socialism. Apart from the rural bias the ideas never hardened into a dogma, but remained a pliable selection for practical government.

Politically the Peasant parties were undoubtedly radical. They stood firmly for representative government based on universal franchise, and all of them favored administrative decentralization and local initiative through co-operative agencies. If they rejected the Soviet collectivist system it was above all because by its nature it would be made and controlled centrally from the towns, leaving the peasants little choice or initiative, and consequently would also have to be imposed by dictatorial means. The programs and actions of the Peasant parties showed a similar unorthodox blending in regard to relations with other nations. In the peasant countries no other section of the people was so firmly attached to transmitted national characteristics and less cosmopolitan in outlook and habits. Yet no other section was less eaten up with the ambitions of political nationalism. In every way the Peasant groups asserted and proved that they had as much faith in international co-operation as in social and economic co-operation at home. They gave stalwart support to the League of Nations, and in a region of many quarrels pressed that all issues, especially with neighboring countries, should be settled by arbitration.

As one eastern country after another succumbed to dictatorship, there was a widespread impression in the West that the Peasant parties had been a failure; and in terms of the exercise of power that seemed borne out by their political history. But even now it is difficult to assess their achievement in creating so quickly a powerful movement. It has been a frequent experience in political history that failure to gain power has acted as a spur to the spread of ideas. As it became clear that the old political elements meant to retain or regain power through economic policy, the Peasant leaders came to see that they could not achieve their social ideals without organized and effective

political action. The land reforms by themselves had not enabled the peasantry to establish themselves as the basic element in the State. When the issue became more acute, especially in the crisis of the thirties, a more radical trend appeared either at the left wing of the main Peasant parties or in separate groups —like the *Pladne* group led by Dr. George Dimitrov in Bulgaria and that of Dr. Dragoljub Jovanović in Serbia, whose leaders had both been much under Socialist influence in their careers, the Ploughmen's Front (*Frontul Plugarilor*) in Transylvania and the *Zwiazek Mlodziezy Wai Polskiej* in Poland.[71] But the fact remains that, for a variety of general and special reasons, Peasant parties were not able to retain power when they reached it. In general the peasants were difficult to organize; over the greater part of the region they were poor and ignorant and, as a result of the livelier elements having left the village, they suffered from a lack of political leadership and contacts, not to speak of the relative isolation in which peasants live and work.

Perhaps the chief difficulty which faced the Peasant parties, however, was a tactical one, the burden of a contradiction between their social plans and their political principles. The economic strains which led to the great depression weighed heavily upon all those agrarian countries and gave little chance, especially in a period of intense national reconstruction, to put into action programs based upon ideals of comprehensive social transformation. But in any case, these Peasant schemes, whatever one may think of them, were in their social conceptions as revolutionary as Socialism, and in the face of ruthless obstruction could have been carried through only by equally ruthless political pressure. The Peasant parties, however, were determined to remain loyal to the democratic principles proclaimed in their programs—the Croat movement under the guidance of Stjepan Radić was actually committed to the principle of nonviolence—and this very devotion left them helpless victims of their own ideals when attacked by vengeful opponents. The Bulgarian regime of Stamboliski was overwhelmed by a counter-revolution, in which the military and the more conservative elements of the old order joined hands, and thereafter the Peasant Party was never given a chance to work freely again. The progressive and democratic government of Witos, by its very moderation, left the old landed ruling group with sufficient strength to join in 1926 in Pilsudski's *coup d'état* which wrecked the program of peasant reforms at the same time as it destroyed democracy. In 1928 the Rumanian Party won much praised for the orderly conduct of their huge gathering of protest at Alba Iulia, in Transylvania, and for their sharp

disavowal of the one column of peasants who started a desultory march on Bucarest. The Croat Party, again, though in complete control of the whole province, never gave way to any act of violent retaliation in spite of the repeated imprisonment and at times even the murder of some of its leaders. But this steadfastness in conduct, this unwillingness to sully their democratic principles, also meant that the Peasant parties were unable to check the spreading reaction, while reactionary forces everywhere never hesitated to wreck them by corruption or violence.

One other factor undoubtedly helped to weaken the prospects of the eastern Peasant parties, namely, the lack of sympathy from western governments. No economic help came to them from the West even when in power, though their programs were not only progressive but also obviously attractive to western industrial countries. The frequent violence brought into action against them provoked no single protest from western governments, though it was clear that no other party or movement could by offering a basis for democratic progress provide a check alike both to Bolshevism and to Fascism. Nor did the western governments show any reluctance to work actively with the dictatorial regimes in eastern Europe throughout the inter-war period.

The failure of the Peasant parties to gain a hold on political power in those years is evident. Against that stands the simple fact that in the face of united opposition from the urban elements, including the Socialists, and despite lack of support from the West, the Peasant movement had enough strength and promise in it to rouse such fear and ire in those elements as caused them to throw away all pretense of democratic rule. But apart from this, what they lost as parties they apparently gained as a movement. Socialism had been a movement in the West long before it could organize in parties; the eastern peasantries found themselves called upon to act as parties before they had been educated politically and philosophically as a movement. Their discomfiture at the seat of government gave them the opportunity to make good that lack. It threw them back upon themselves and produced an intense, an almost introspective interest in the nature of their class and problems. Shut off from power and government they set out on a voyage of self-discovery and self-education, to give body to a movement which through historical circumstances had started with more form than content. That was all the more necessary in their case because their program did not rely on a continuing trend, taking over existing forms of production and society, as Socialism took them from capitalism, but was bent upon achieving a

fresh conception of social life, on its spiritual as much as on its material side.

Defeat in political action led them towards a new strategy, to an intense effort to develop the social consciousness of their peasant followers and to consolidate them as a class. Work and life were to be related to each other; Radić used to say to his followers. "You can't be a good peasant politically unless you are a good peasant farmer." The trend was perhaps a little crude in its attack on much that was characteristic of industrial civilization, but that gave practical expression to the spiritual side of the peasant revival, and prevented the land reforms from appearing to be just a grabbing of land by the peasants. Many of the leaders at any rate had a vision of a new rural civilization, strengthened by a Green International which was to keep peace among the peasant countries. With a little of the fiery pompousness of the pulpit, their idea was set forth in a leaflet issued by one of their joint organizations in 1922, *The Idea of Universal Agrarism;* it concluded with this sentence: "It is up to the agriculturalists of the whole world, once they have understood their own significance and value and their common destiny, to unite for the sake of the welfare of the people—to defend society, to assist the State on its way to peace, and to uphold agriculture; that is to say, by growing food and by the character of their own existence, to fulfil the principal agrarian idea in giving the people, the States and the nations a firm foundation for a life of material and moral well-being."[72]

The peasant was finding himself. "One notices an unaccustomed buoyancy in their ways," remarked the Transylvania writer, Goga, "a livelier gleam in their eyes, a ripple of boldness, above all a critical temper which knocks at every gate. That nervous fluid has overflowed into the farthest hamlets, arousing many questionings. . . . Who are we? How many are we? What is it we are receiving? Who gives it us? What is our right?"[73] As the oldest element in organized society, they not unnaturally sought comfort and strength first in the history of their past. In countries like Poland and Rumania and Serbia the peasant was discovering that in the long struggle for independence he had been the country's strength and had been glorified for his courage and staunchness. Professor Bujak wrote about Poland, "We discover in the past the peasant who was not only a serf but also a soldier and a pillar of his community. We grow interested in social and political leaders who had sprung up from among the peasants." Some writers even tried to project the peasants' history against the general background of modern civilization. Stjepan Radić wrote an outline of European his-

tory with emphasis on peasant experience. More specific studies, like Swietochowski's books on Poland, used the past to show the danger to the State in the present neglect of the peasant mass of the people.[74]

Books like these had a wide repercussion in the countryside, especially among the younger generation. Discovering their past helped the peasants to become conscious of their strength, of their numbers, of their fellowship with peasants elsewhere, and of the central position they and their fellows had in the life and advance of their countries. An extensive literature grew up in a very short time, in the form of fiction and scholarly studies, the work both of students and of peasant writers. In the years before the Second World War in Poland almost half of the literary production came from peasant writers or was about peasant matters. Books like Holoček's *Nasi* (*Our People*) or Reymont's *Chlopy* (*The Peasants*) became famous for their picture of a highly developed rural civilization, the product of many centuries. It was characteristic of the new trend, however, that this romantic approach soon gave place to more realistic writings based on an intimate knowledge of village life and problems. Some of these new contributions were actually the work of villagers, with something of a fashion in peasant autobiographies.[75] The most valuable work was done in the way of sociological studies. The group working under Professor Gusti at the Rumanian Sociological Institute, in Bucarest, produced a whole series of scholarly monographs, besides many papers printed in their able periodical review.[76] In Poland Professor Bujak, himself of peasant origin, and the group working with him in the Seminar of Economic History in the University of Lwow, issued a series of monographs on the history and culture of the village and also published a monthly review.[77] Equally important studies were made in Czechoslovakia, and in Croatia by the *Seljačka Sloga* organization under the leadership of Rudolf Herceg. In Hungary the so-called "village explorers," a group of intellectuals of peasant origin, produced many excellent studies and nursed a whole current of opinion with them. Nothing as substantial, or with such deep insight, in the way of monographic inquiries into rural life was produced in the West in the same period.

There was in all this, however, much more than the academic interest of groups of students. These young people went into the villages not merely to study their culture and problems, but in a spirit of pilgrimage. They went in a period of arbitrary government, of corrupt administration and of general social bewilderment to refresh themselves spiritually by contact with the simple peasants and the earth. Their attitude recalled the

older Russian episode of the "going among the people," and the words in which Sir John Maynard has described the earlier, perfectly fitted also the more recent episode: "The 'intelligentsia' felt that they had lost something of a primitive inspiration when they parted with their primitive simplicity, and they went to the people as one might go to an oracle, to find the truth which was in them. But they went also to render service, to instruct and help." They got their knowledge not from statistics and questionnaires, but by living and working as a team in some village for months at a time; and in keeping with the times, the young people now brought from their pilgrimage not vague idealistic aspirations but detailed and exact sociological knowledge. The Hungarian Communist author, Révai, wrote of this Populist movement as being "without exaggeration the most important intellectual current of the past two decades in Hungary," and that its new sociological methods shed more light on the complex stratification of rural society than had half-a-century of agrarian statistics put together.[78]

At the same time all these "explorers" looked upon their work as a basis for political and social reform. It was carried on at a time when political action was practically banned, but it also showed the connection between the two; the Hungarian group, for instance, was responsible for the organization of the "March Front" in 1938 and of a National Peasant Party a year later. One other point about the episode is therefore worthy of notice. Because of the mixed character of the population in Transylvania, Hungarian and Rumanian students readily joined together for the purpose of that village exploration. This was the only instance of collaboration between two peoples who had lived in continuous enmity; while politics divided them, interest in the people, in the living village community, alone could bring them together as no ideological Socialist movement had ever been able to do.

The vitality of the new trend, as well as its class solidarity, found particular expression in the rise of a widespread peasant youth movement. These youth groups displayed a spirit of fierce independence, believing fervently in a "new man closely bound to the soil and to nature."[79] The old village ways, with their "serf tradition," and the old pillars of the village, like the priest, came under searching criticism from them; though it was remarkable that even in Catholic areas, and in sharp contrast with the ways of the Communists, they managed, like the Croat movement, to divert clerical influence from their secular affairs wtihout attacking the church or becoming less religious.[80] The village now wanted service, not direction, and

priests and teachers could retain influence only in so far as they helped the villagers to work out their problems in their own way. What the peasants were learning about their past and about their present condition made them feel that they were entitled at last to have a share, indeed a special share, in shaping their country's future. In eastern Europe, said Dr. Krnjević, a leader of the Croat Party, the peasants were not just a professional group, who happened to be engaged in farming; they "form the foundation of the nation itself and give specific and distinct features to the whole national life."[81]

Having been rather in awe of the town the peasants now began to look down on it.[82] They were both resentful of the advantages it had enjoyed, and scornful of its feverish and selfish ways.[83] No theme appeared more persistently in peasant writings and programs than that of revolt aganist the political and social domination of the towns. Ante Radić, one of the founders of the Croat movement, put it clearly in an essay when, speaking of a "new society based on the heart and soul," he said that it could come only if the peasants broke the political monopoly of the urban classes, so that the State might be governed "from below, not from above." Every individual would then realize that "none of us is so great that he can do everything, and none so small that he can do nothing."[84] A recent writer spoke of the new trend as marking "the end of the epoch inaugurated by the French Revolution. It was the town that for a century-and-a-half represented the State organization, the home of the intellectual and the artist, and the tribune of the politician. The rural community, unorganized, estranged from large centers of public activity, led a dull existence, rarely touched by faint echoes of bourgeois ideas which subsequently would impose upon the village obligations and conventions alien to it both in form and in spirit."[85]

Modern ideas of democracy also had reached the peasants through the towns, but the masters of the towns had then gone on to rule and control the country in their own way. In the East these groups professed democratic principles, but used arbitrary methods to preserve their privileged position. For one reason or another they had endowed their countries with liberal constitutions, but governed them with corrupt and oppressive administrations; indeed, the more liberal the text the more discordant was the reality.[86] At the same time, modern trends in legislation, in the functions of central authority and of economic organizations, were all increasing the range of effective decisions and influences coming from the town. These rested, moreover, on empirical grounds of law or profit, without regard to that sense for tradition and equity which was so im-

portant in peasant society. The spirit of the one was completely individualistic, of the other, communal; in the new totalitarian regimes the individual advantage was supposedly merged into a communal concern, but one that was assumed, not evident, in some distant communal profit, not in everyday communal living together. As a reaction the philosophy which Ante and Stjepan Radić had worked out for their Croat followers, like that of other Peasant leaders, looked upon those who worked the land as having a special right to govern. For example, the first clause of the program of the Polish People's Party, of December 1933, put it plainly:

> Because of their numbers, their physical and moral strength which derives from their association with the land and their value to nation and State, the rural population are justified in regarding themselves as the natural masters of Poland. And so the People's Party, as the political representative of this population, is concerned not only with the interests of the rural class but also with the interests of the whole Polish nation and State which has been created by the people through the labors of a thousand years.

For all these reasons they also looked upon the village community, rather than the individual, as the proper unit of government; a view, it is interesting to find, which had been urged also by Professor Gangulee for India.[87]

Resentment against the towns, against their ways and their power, was one of the few untoward features of the peasant revival, but also one of its most potent and general traits. Even in the mildest of these groupings, the Serbian Peasant party, had in its minimum program such points as the one asking that "All privileges possessed by the towns at the expense of the villages must be abolished." That sounded innocuous enough, but if one considers the implications of the argument that public money should be spent on the villages in the same proportion in which it was collected from the villages, it must be clear that, however plausible, the principle would force some painful readjustments in the life of the urban populations. The peasant writers argued that such a policy would ultimately balance out for the nation's good, and could therefore not fail to be of advantage to the working class, who would get their share of whatever political and social democracy the peasants could secure. If in the process the exuberant life of the capital towns were to lose some of its glitter, the Peasant leaders perhaps would have liked nothing better. They often spoke with the passion of rural Savonarolas against the corrupting and oppressive domination of the towns—standardized, mechanized, dehumanized in culture, as Ante Radić said—whose population

"sometimes numbers not more than 20 or 30 per cent of the nation. On a world scale this paradox means that four hundred million people dominate some eighteen hundred million people."[88]

The diverging interests of town and country, of industry and agriculture, have of course been a perennial issue everywhere since the rise of modern industry, with its division of labor and life between the two sections. There were agrarian movements further afield, for instance in Mexico,[89] in the United States[90] and elsewhere, that shared the feeling that this divergence went deeper than mere economic disadvantage, but the realization was more acute among the peasants of eastern Europe. Nevertheless, even among eastern Peasant leaders there were those who felt the need for adjusting the ideology of the movement so as to lessen the division between town and country, in so far as it affected particularly relations between peasants and industrial workers. The sentiment was especially evident among the smaller, distinctly left-wing and more "activist" groups, like the Popular Peasant Party in Serbia, the Ploughmen's Front in Rumania and like-minded groups in Poland and Bulgaria. These groups were among those who in the thirties favored the idea of a Popular Front and whose views sometimes seemed to be a cross between Socialism and Peasant conceptions.[91] They accepted, for instance, Marxist theory on the concentration of capital and production, but did not think that it had any reality outside industrial production. They inclined more than the main Peasant parties to the theory of class division, but stopped short of the Marxist definition of social classes, wholly based as it was on the position of various elements in the process of production; by adding to it the criterion of the place of production they found themselves back in the rural camp. "A village property owner," said Dr. Jovanović, "is not identical with an urban capitalist; nor is a village laborer identical with an urban proletarian. If in our present system the worker is oppressed by the capitalist, the village as a whole is oppressed and wronged by the town."[92]

One of the exponents of the ideology of the Croat movement, Dr. Herceg, described modern society from a historical point of view as being like a pyramid: at the top were the privileged classes, in the middle the bourgeoisie, and at the bottom the working class. This could have been as well any Socialist picture, but Herceg went on to add another special layer, on which the whole social pyramid rested as on a foundation—the innumerable peasant masses of Europe, Asia, Africa and America. For those peasant masses there was the problem not only of liberating labor from its slavery under capital, but also

of doing away with the social and cultural differences which left the village behind the town.[93] The new Peasant outlook stood out sharply in this picture, in which the whole social pyramid as built so far lay heavily on the countryside, and it came out in the writer's deductions as well. Oppressed classes, said Dr. Herceg, asserted themselves historically in revolutions. The bourgeoisie asserted itself in the French Revolution, the proletariat in the Russian Revolution; for every class there was only one revolution of such magnitude in some one country, whence its achievements spread in an evolutionary way to other peoples. There was only one class left which still had to liberate and assert itself, the peasantry, and the next revolution would come from the village. But the villages moved slowly, unlike the impatient and intolerant towns, and peasant revolts were rare. The village would change its state rather by evolution, by reform and education, and in collaboration with its natural ally, the urban working class. The latter sentiment may have been more genuine and generous than was that of the Marxists, who wanted the peasants only as temporary allies during the revolutionary struggle, but its conception of both revolutionary strategy and tactics was essentially rural. At any rate, it seems to have been no more successful from the Peasant side than were the revisionists from the Socialist side in bridging the steep ideological gulf dug between the two by Marxism.

The Peasant leaders claimed not only that their program would bring comfort to their own people, but that it was the only way of bringing peace to eastern Europe. Differences between the Danubian peoples were mostly found at the urban level, while affinities were strong at the rural level. The Peasant groups in that region came together quite naturally and began to co-operate in economic matters as well. The possibility of a Green International was actual enough for the idea to be regarded as treasonable, from the national point of view, by the groups in power. Stamboliski especially believed that by uniting the peasants of those countries, in which they formed a majority, they could put an end to international rivalry. The whole conception was boldly if rather vaguely put forth in *The Idea of Universal Agrarism*,[94] and more carefully developed by Rudolf Herceg in his *Pangea*.[95] The first rudimentary organization was the International Agrarian Bureau, with its seat in Prague, which was meant to be an information center and act as a link between the eastern and western peasant groups on matters of common economic and international interest[96] Dr. Hodza described its purpose in 1925 in this way: "We know that agrar-

ian democracy . . . is a strong bond which will bring the peoples together in an international unity—a formal, organic and spiritual unity against which all attacks whether from the imperialist Right or the Bolshevik Left will shatter themselves."[97] The Secretary of the Bureau more cautiously pointed out, however, that because of their strong local attachments and the nature of their work the peasants could not be rigidly organized internationally; he looked upon the Bureau more as a clearing house for building up common ties and exchanging information.[98] After 1928 the Bureau held annual congresses until engulfed by the depression and the political storms to which it gave rise. A more active international effort, originating in the growing agricultural crisis of the thirties, was the bloc of eastern European states. Several conferences were held during the summer of 1930, with peasant delegates from Esthonia, Latvia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Rumania, with the purpose of co-ordinating the economic policy of their countries so as to obtain better trading conditions from the industrial states, but as the crisis sharpened and spread the bloc proved too weak to fulfill its aims.[99]

Besides the wider Green International of the eastern peasants two other groups bore a similar title. Soon after the First World War the Bavarian Dr. Heim and some Austrian agrarians made an abortive attempt to join together the Peasant groups of central Europe in a Green International. Their tendency was Conservative and anti-Bolshevik, and while some of the leaders kept neutral others had a clerical bias.[100] The second was a Communist effort, and as such was particularly interesting and suggestive. Though no Peasant party could conceivably exist in Russia, the Soviets encouraged some of the refugees living in Moscow to set up a Communist Peasant International there. Formed in the autumn of 1923, on the occasion of the All-Russian Agricultural Exposition, it held its first congress in 1925; it published quite a number of pamphlets and also a periodical, but made no visible impression on peasant groups anywhere.

On the face of it there was something paradoxical in these quick-rising international aspirations. The national element at its most genuine was everywhere represented by the peasants, deep-rooted in their land, as it were, physically, as spiritually they were steeped in its traditions and culture. As one after the other the less developed countries plunged into bleak imitations of western economic and urban organization, their peasants often were the only part of the people that kept to traditional national ways. There is perhaps much to be learned about the nature of nationality from this paradox, for strong as the na-

tional roots of the peasants are they seem nowhere to have led to nationalist rivalries. In mixed regions like Transylvania peasants of two or three nationalities had for generations lived peacefully in the same village, until pressed and prodded by nationalist propaganda from the main towns. This was demonstrated also by the political conduct of the new Peasant parties, and that in very difficult circumstances. While nationalism was rampant in the Danubian region, in the years after the Versailles settlement, the Czechoslovak Agrarians took the lead in establishing relations with the agrarian group of the Sudeten Germans and brought its representatives into the Czechoslovak Cabinet. In Hungary and Rumania the Peasant groups openly stood up against the virulent anti-semitism tolerated if not encouraged by those in power.[101] Everywhere in those countries the Peasant groups showed active goodwill to the new national minorities and in return won their support.

The belief, so easily held by the early *narodniki,* that farmers in general and peasants in particular were by their needs and temperament peacefully inclined, runs indeed through Populist outlook everywhere and at all times.[102] A letter of Benjamin Franklin's written in 1768, after coming into contact with the Physiocrats in Paris, put this view in a characteristic passage: "There seem to be but three ways for a nation to acquire wealth. The first is by war, as the Romans did, in plundering their conquered neighbours. This is robbery. The second by commerce, which is generally cheating. The third by agriculture, the only honest way, wherein man receives a real increase of the seed thrown into the ground, in a kind of continual miracle."[103] Professor Sorokin also has suggested that conflict between capital and labor, and still more wars between nations, were as unprofitable to the farmer as they were to humanity.[104] And in an article written in 1919 the distinguished French historian, Professor Seignobos, exclaimed: "We seek guarantees against a return of the war spirit, and there is no regime more pacific than a democracy of peasant proprietors. Since the world began no such community has ever desired or prepared or commenced a war."[105]

To have been born in such times and conditions that often "its fruit was rotten ere it was ripe," has so far left the Peasant movement, for the student at any rate, little more than a phenomenon and an aspiration. In more favorable circumstances much could have depended on its relations with other groups and sections of the community, particularly with the intelligentsia and the industrial workers. A movement of such radical temper could hardly have avoided meeting with opposition

from the ruling groups,[106] while in general conditions in the region were such as to steer the Peasant movement, in spite of its stand for private property, inexorably leftwards. The landlords had been reduced to impotence, and there was not enough land to make possible the rise of a weighty rural middle class; hence any agrarian movement was bound to be dominated for a long time by the mass of small peasants—a fact which encouraged some Communist writers in the conviction that ultimately the movement must break in two.[107] When an Agrarian League was formed in Rumania in 1928, to further the professional interests of all farmers, the Peasant Party was at once suspicious that it might prove an attempt to revive a Conservative agrarianism, like that of the German *Landbund*, and warned it against doing anything that would interfere with the work of the Party.[108] Even in Czechoslovakia where the agrarian movement had started with just such middle-class views and elements, after the First World War its attitude and the land reform it instituted had to be attuned to the more radical temper of the smallholders. Professor Rădulescu-Motru's idea that Conservatives and peasants shared a "natural" affinity and should form a "natural" political alliance rested, it would seem, on a confusion between certain psychological and cultural traits of the peasants and their social aspirations.[109]

There was another reason for the leftward trend of the movement, one related not to its composition but to its relative position in the political front. As long as there was no substantial proletarian movement, and this implied quite a long time, the Peasant movement was the only effective instrument for radical reform; that is why, like Labour in the West, it attracted many of the more spirited intellectuals, young and old. At the same time a new movement which consisted of scattered, unprepared and politically inexperienced rural populations obviously depended greatly on the help of the intelligentsia. In the earlier phase, as it began to take political shape and disclose its tendency, the movement and the Parties had not had much of this; but the change in this respect was especially marked and significant. Everywhere the countryside has suffered from what has come to be known as "flight from the land." But whereas in the West it was mainly the laborers who left the village, in the eastern countries it was rather the sons of the better-off peasants, the village intelligentsia, who abandoned it and were apt to look down on their former life, showing more indifference to the peasants' problems than even the bourgeoisie. With the rise of the Peasant movement the village intelligentsia came to show a new sense of pride in what formerly they had tried

to leave behind them. Previously, wrote Professor Bujak, "only those members of the intelligentsia would admit their solidarity with the countryside who wanted to pursue political careers. Nowadays the sons of the village do so openly, though knowing that this might get them into trouble." That was true of all the peasant countries; it meant the emergence of a new social group, of an intelligentsia of peasant origin and with peasant interests, who now were anxious to maintain the cultural and social links with the village and to become its natural spokesmen. In Poland this actually led in 1938 to a formal organization, the *League of Peasant Intelligentsia and Friends of the Village.* The emergence of the peasant masses into social and political life was forcing the intelligentsia, as the price of survival, into a thorough revision of its functions within national society. But it was in no way, or only rarely, an unwilling change. In countries which had been notorious for the poverty of their professional and administrative material the change brought to light unsuspected forces of public interest and devotion, which apparently had only been waiting to be called forth in the service of the nation.

Politically and practically the most important issue for the Peasant movement was its relations with the urban workers and their organizations. In the West the general line had been traced out, only to be sent astray, by Marxist Socialism. But while this had affected earlier relations also in the East, it really made little sense there. In the eastern countries the Socialist movement was confined to narrower limits than even the limits of industry; the bulk of the workers in the primary industries (mining, forestry, etc.) and not a few of the workers in factories were still peasants who owned a bit of land and returned to it whenever they could. "Before 1917, there were very few factory workers whose parents had been factory workers also, in Great Russia outside St. Petersburg and Moscow. A great number of urban workers were reared as peasants, and in many cases they returned to their village to marry and raise their children."[110] For the same reason, as Madgearu pointed out, "in agrarian countries it is much easier for peasants and workers to co-operate politically, seeing that the industrial proletariat has only recently emerged from the peasantry."[111]

But these views and sentiments were seldom shared by the Socialist leaders. They seemed unable to break away from the ideas they had received ready-made from western oracles; though they may have been also afraid of being swamped by the Peasant movement if they allowed ideological differences to fade.[112] All too often they let themselves be drawn into the camp of those who were trying to wreck the Peasant move-

ment. The Bulgarian Socialists joined the reactionary government which had brought about by violence the end of Stamboliski and of his government; the Hungarian Socialists after 1920 abstained from all activity among landless laborers in virtue of a pact with Count Bethlen, which in return assured them a measure of parliamentary representation; the Yugoslav Party often worked with the regime against the Peasant opposition. Even the Czech Socialists, though partners throughout the inter-war period in a coalition government with the Agrarians, never allowed their political antagonism to cool.[113] A typical illustration of that mentality was the plea of an old and able Serbian Marxist, Lapčević, in the early twenties, for a return to the old system of granting electoral privileges to the towns, though universal suffrage had been in force in Serbia already before the First World War. At the same time and in spite of all this, the Peasant parties were attracting many industrial workers, which made some of their writers claim that in truth they were a popular, not a class movement.

The Soviet writer Timov, writing about Rumania, attributed this success wholly to the weakness of the Socialist groups, but felt confident that Communism would quickly change all that. He admitted that the Peasant movement had a revolutionary effect in that it was awakening the peasant masses, but its fate would be decided by the growth of Communism which would assume control and "liberate peasants and workers" alike. "When the clash comes," he wrote, "the Tsaranists will find themselves on the side of the bourgeoisie while, for the sake of the land, the peasants will submit to the political hegemony of the proletariat."[114] There was at the time little evidence of either possibility. It was not likely, as Dr. Maček wrote, that the peasants would accept a Communism which would "turn the peasant into a serf of the State—that very peasant who had hardly been set free and begun, with the help of his own political and economic organizations, to free himself from the consequences of feudal serfdom."[115] Here and there, especially in the Slav countries, some peasants felt a kind of hearsay attraction for Soviet Russia; others again, not necessarily the poorest, had some sympathy for the Communists in their own country because of their brutal persecution by the governments. But when radically inclined they were drawn rather to movements like the Rumanian Iron Guard, whose cloudy politics were combined with an equally vague religious mysticism, with many a young priest among their most fervent propagandists. The harsh materialist approach of the Marxists was too far removed from the mentality of the peasants, and the distance was not being reduced by everyday relations between them; nor was

there any difference in agrarian matters between Socialists and Communists. In Poland, in Czechoslovakia and elsewhere many politicians and writers brought up in the Socialist tradition, and otherwise progressive in their attitude, when dealing with the land and the peasants often showed themselves more hostile than even the Conservative sections. Nothing seemed able to bridge that prescribed ideological division between Socialists and Peasants, not even the need of consolidating after the First World War their joint revolutionary gains in central and eastern Europe. A few western Socialists may have realized, as one of them wrote in 1921, that the Second International had failed for want of paying sufficient attention to the peasants.[116] Without peasant support the Socialist drive could not be sustained for long. The peasant's power lies not in action but in resistance; that is why he so often proves an endless puzzle to revolutionaries and reactionaries alike. He is the "greatest passive resister in all history," wrote Mr. Tiltman. In eastern Europe the peasants had suffered long and harrowing oppression, both by foreign conquerors and by their own ruling groups, yet they survived and were able suddenly to rise up as a conscious and determined political force. If the peasants do not fight it does not mean that they have given in. As Dr. Voja Marinković—one time Foreign Minister and one of Yugoslavia's most perspicacious politicians—said to the writer, they will wait ten, twenty, fifty years to bring about the change they want.[117] "The peasant is terrible," he went on. "What can you do with people who throughout five centuries of Turkish domination never ceased to regard it as anything but a stop-gap?"

All things considered, the Peasant movement played a dominant and stirring part in the history of eastern Europe during the inter-war period. If it could not establish itself, its failure was no different from that of the large and old-established Socialist parties to retain their hold on power in the West; and there is no doubt that their joint failure was largely due to their separate action. The Peasant parties and programs were in most respects at odds with Socialist ideology and tactics. In many ways their views were a natural reaction to the criticism which Socialists more than any other group had levelled at western evolution. But whereas the Socialists would have continued that evolution, merely with a change in the agents controlling it, the Peasants wanted to break away from it altogether while they still had a chance to do so. Their position and aspirations, therefore, went altogether contrary to the Socialist program; and, if accepted, it would also have meant, if only by implication, the barring of the Socialists' way to power. Whatever one may think of those Peasant views, the point one has to note is

that they were rooted in the traditional claims of the peasant masses, particularly in regard to landholding, and also attuned to their psychology and their traditional ways and inclinations; while at every point that peasant mentality seemed to be out of tune with that with which Marxist Socialism had permeated the workers' movement.

The philosophy and program of the Peasant movement had not grown, like Marxism, out of a theory, however ingenious, but out of conditions as they existed in the peasant countries and the reality of a way life. The Peasant leaders never assumed that their views had any validity for industrialized countries; on the other hand, conditions in the eastern countries had to be bent forcibly before they could be fitted at all into the Marxian formula, and that formula itself was continuously twisted in the process. No part of the Peasant program perhaps was so zealously held as the Marxist creed was by its followers. But in the event no part of it had to be so manhandled as was the Marxian agrarian theory on the way to power. In that sense, at any rate, the Peasant view seemed more truly bound to the line of social evolution than Marxism, which merely assumed and decreed its line; and that is perhaps one reason why the Green Rising never contemplated a peasant dictatorship as necessary for its purpose.

PART FOUR/THROUGH DOGMA TO DICTATORSHIP

Chapter 11

The Peasant Between Right and Left: The "Romantic" Dictators

IN THE two decades after the First World War the long theoretical dispute between Marxism and Populism turned into dramatic actuality. Both the Peasants and the Marxists—old Socialists and new Communists—found themselves at last in a position to wield actual power and to apply their particular doctrines. History was providing an opportunity to draw a preliminary balance-sheet of how Marxist theory was likely to work out in the evolution of eastern Europe. One dubious point lay precisely in that un-dialectical circumstance, that the only part of the Marxist system which thus came up for a test was the agrarian one. Its chief part, the contest between proletariat and capitalism, flickered up here and there all over the West, but in no western country did it light up a consuming political fire. Even in defeated and disrupted Germany it caused only a momentary conflagration, which soon died down. The only full Marxist triumph—if we adhere for the moment to political labels without looking too closely into their fitness—with any prospect of holding out, was in the agrarian East. But in that region the conditions for it were so artificial that its revolutionary success also raised a revolutionary competition. A Marxist success in an industrial country would automatically have given the movement a commanding position. In Russia the Bolsheviks were able to gain hold of power by a masterly political maneuver, but that did not carry with it also implicit control of economic life and the support of those engaged in it. To be able to entrench itself at the seat of government, and especially to build up a centralized system of economic control, the Bolshevik group had to continue to rely on forcible means, and in effect to prolong the civil war for an indefinite period of time.

Events in western Europe, whatever their importance, were less relevant to the agrarian issue; too many other factors were mixed in the social struggle which surged up all over the West after 1918. In eastern Europe the issues were starker. War and revolution had caused a thorough historical upheaval and had

thrown up new forces and faiths with an opportunity to reshape political and social life according to their views. The chief of these forces, Communism and Peasantism, were both of them new as competitors for political power, and between them they came to dominate the stage. From the very start the Communist revolution was shadowed by a Peasant revolution. In Russia the first managed to get itself into power and to stay there. In the rest of central and eastern Europe it soon lost its few early gains and indeed provoked the rise of a tacit anti-Communist front throughout the region.

We have noticed before that in several respects there were substantial differences between the position of the peasants in eastern and western Europe. For a while it looked as if their common rural interest might bring them together. But as the economic crisis of the thirties grew more tense, the political factor came uppermost again and the different social structures produced quite different political relationships in the two parts of the Continent. In the West Fascism was able to woo the peasant groups with some effect, but in the East the peasant masses on the contrary solidified into a radical movement. Their groups and parties formed the main barrier against the dictatorial trend and, therefore, also its chief butt and victim. The position of the peasant groups in East and West had only this trait in common, that in both parts of Europe it was in the main an effect, and as it proved a fatal effect, of the division between workers and peasants.

While the Peasant movement was struggling forward through many trials it was bound to experience, therefore, the repercussions of the two dictatorial currents between which it found itself wedged. In the East the Soviets appealed to the workers against the peasants; in central and western Europe, Fascist dictators tried to enlist the peasants against the workers. It was significant of the two reactionary mass-movements which made their appearance in western Europe that both laid great store upon peasant life and work for the strength and prosperity of the state. German National-Socialism especially set the fashion for an almost mystical glorification of the peasant. Already in *Mein Kampf* Hitler had referred to "a healthy peasantry as the foundation for the whole nation."[1] In 1930 the agrarian expert Walter Darré, one of the abler ideologists of the movement and later Minister of Agriculture, published a book whose title was to supply a favorite Nazi slogan. "Blood and soil" was obviously as much a social philosophy as an agrarian program, with hierarchical and mystical elements in it.[2] Land was to be regarded not simply as "a factor in production," but as a foundation on which to maintain the unity and independence of the

peasant family system. The Spanish Falangists were telling the peasants that "Spain was the countryside." In Germany as in Spain, and later in Vichy France, the peasant family was set up as the hope for national revival, and agrarian policy was devoted therefore to encouraging that peasant system. When discussing the resettlement of conquered territories with German peasants, the official Nazi journal pointed out that "it has been proved that peasant land remains much more securely German land than land in the hands of large owners." But while anxious to give land to the peasants, Nazism also wanted that property, more than any other form of property, to carry a national-racial responsibility with it. "The idea of property and the idea of racial (*völkig*) obligation must be joined here into a synthesis."[3] It was to be a population policy, and also a spring of national regeneration.[4] France, said Marshal Pétain, "will recover all her strength by contact with the soil." And a Nazi spokesman demanded the "de-urbanization of our whole way of thinking."

Two factors, war and revolution, had served to bring the peasant into sudden political and social prominence in the West. The Bolshevik revolution and its repercussions, however transient, naturally led Conservative circles, as a Vichy spokesman put it, to oppose the "stable" peasant to the "restless" industrial worker. There was also an economic-strategical factor, the new importance acquired by agriculture under the stress of modern war and blockade. The Nazi "New Order" quite openly aimed at making the Continent agriculturally self-sufficient; the Vichy Minister Caziot also justified his policy with the argument that it had been proved that a number of small farms produced more than if the same area formed only one large estate. For these several reasons the dictatorial regimes also sought to organize the peasants in corporative bodies, as in Germany and Italy, and later in Vichy France and Spain, or in anti-Liberal parties and fronts, as in Holland under the occupation. At their two opposite political poles the dictatorial currents in East and West were therefore pursuing in this field much the same ends. Both wanted to raise agricultural production to a point as near as could be to self-sufficiency.[5] The Soviets meant to achieve this through collectivization; as in the process they destroyed the social foundation of the Russian peasantry, they secured thereby also their second aim, which was to weaken the only potential source of internal opposition to their regime. The Fascist dictators labored towards the same end by giving the peasants in their countries a privileged status and practical favors; they added to this a mystical-reactionary tinge which of course could have meaning only in the West.

How the western peasants reacted to these blandishments cannot be said reliably. In August 1942 the Vichy Minister, Marcel Déat, admitted that in spite of all the nice things that were being said to them the peasants "had withdrawn into their shell"; and in June of the same year, at the Spanish National Syndical Congress, the syndical leaders bitterly complained that the old agricultural co-operatives were eating into the allegiance of the rural population to the new syndical services. The peasants would seem to have derived in fact little real benefit from those romantic promises; they could not very well do so when the whole national organization, as in Spain, was ill-managed and extravagant, or when, as in Germany, with the growing food shortage, increasing regimentation made their life and work subservient to the political aims of the Nazi State. That was not very different from the experience of the peasants in the U.S.S.R.; and, again as in Russia, largely because of the growing German war preparations, the agricultural population was steadily falling, so that the peasants were suffering from a shortage of labor, while the industrial workers had to be given increasing attention and rewards. Notwithstanding all the talk about "blood and soil," once the Nazis were firmly in power their whole phantasmagory, like the other organized mass-emotions, came to rest much more on its urban following than on the hard-bitten farmers. But in its early days, while German Social-Democracy was still predominant in parliament, especially after the elections of May 1928, Hitler had "laid the foundations of a different sort of power" in the countryside. "His movement, though restricted and of small electoral importance in those days, had spread its network . . . over the villages and small towns. German industrial labor and its leaders were to pay heavily for their neglect of the 'reactionary,' 'stupid,' and 'backward' farmers and peasants."[6]

Some of the eastern right-wing dictators also tried to wean away the peasants from the radical trend, and one of the means they used to undermine the new Peasant parties was to encourage various Fascistic activities in the countryside. Among the more notorious attempts was the Iron Guard in Rumania, connected with the Nazi organization, which for the first time introduced murder as a weapon in Rumanian political life; among its victims was the leading intellectual of the Peasant movement, the economist Madgearu. King Carol also organized uniformed "village teams" of young intellectuals, on the lines of the sociological teams which had earlier worked for scientific ends in the villages, so as to get through them at the peasants. A more elaborate attempt of that nature was the "Brannik" organization in Bulgaria, officially created to combat

Communism under the slogan "God, King and Fatherland." It too worked with groups of young people who were sent into the villages to make contact with the peasants.[7] None of these attempts had any solid effect among the peasants, but the fact that they were tried tells its own story. In eastern Europe if the powers that were had really wanted to stem Communism they only had to give the new Peasant movement its chance. It is obvious that as in the West, the true purpose was to prevent the consolidation of democratically organized popular movements.

The attitude of the Fascist dictators towards the peasants, even the verbiage they used in wooing them, was so very alike that it seems clear that in their different countries they were able to play upon identical strings—upon the peasant's resentment of urban predominance, and especially upon the deep suspicion with which the ideas and plans of the organized workers filled him. In effect the western dictators did little that was to prove of advantage to the peasants, but their professions served well enough for keeping up the political distance between peasants and workers.

Chapter 12

Socialism in Search of a Policy

OUTSIDE RUSSIA the battle of the ideologies had never really come to a head. In the eastern countries it had merely been pushed under, not resolved, by the ephemeral dictatorial regimes, and it re-emerged therefore after a second war and revolution only the more sharply. But it re-emerged less as an intellectual argument, or even a contest of party programs, than as a welter of fierce strivings for power, after unparalleled political disruption and a collapse which engulfed all the Continental regimes except for a handful along the western fringe. No one could mark down in such a confused state of things any clear line of ideological changes and subtleties. At best one can note a trend, following it from the inter-war period to the aftermath of the Second World War, and even that would not be a straightforward trend. In these agrarian matters there were as many differences of view amongst Socialists in any one country as there were between Socialists from country to country. The confusion, moreover, was made worse by the emergence of separate Communist parties and groups; they were more tightly organized than the Socialists, but their attitude and actions were for that very reason less easy to predict. Indeed, the dif-

ferences between Socialists and Communists in actual policy more often than not seemed to belie what should have been expected from each of them on grounds of theoretical orthodoxy.

Both groups no doubt still held in agrarian matters to the Marxian position, but their moves in regard to it at any point of time derived from a different inspiration. In general it would be true to say that the Socialists tried to remain good Marxists, while the Communists only cared to be good Leninists. The Socialists nowhere formally dropped the Marxist theory and policy from their programs; they often temporized in pressing it, or compromised on it in practice, but they always did so frankly as temporary expedients. The Communists played with the Marxist doctrine as they thought fit; they in turn proclaimed it solemnly anew or threw it overboard altogether if at any time their revolutionary bark seemed top-heavy. When the Socialists succumbed to such tactical shifts they did so with obvious pangs of conscience and never with a united will; the Communists looked upon such tactics as an end in themselves, and no matter how sharp the turn, they always turned together all down the line as one disciplined cohort. A sentence will suffice to point out how these drawn-out confusions ended in the matter of the agrarian issue discussed here. The Marxist hesitations of the Socialists, and the tactical nonchalance of the Communists, moved to their grim ending with the fatality of a Greek drama. Although they had helped after the Second World War, out of Marxist devotion, in the work of breaking the Peasant parties and movement, it was soon the turn of the Socialists themselves to be crushed under the Juggernaut of Leninist tactics.

Extravagance in textual doctrine, or misjudgments in the heat of the revolutionary excitement which followed the First World War, were perhaps less significant than the fact that even after the rise of Fascism western Socialists could not think of working out a common program and front with the peasants. They remained under the influence of the industrial-proletarian philter injected into Socialism by Marx, and seemingly were incapable in any way of adapting their views to the realities of rural life and problems. Nevertheless, in the years between the wars a certain change did take place in the approach. Many of the parties confessed to having learned the lesson of the years which followed the First World War and therefore intended to devote special attention to the position of the peasant.[8] Several Socialist parties, members of the Second International, thereupon set to work and prepared agrarian programs; these differed according to conditions in the various countries, espe-

cially as between the industrial countries of the West and the countries of central and eastern Europe, but a few general features in regard to both immediate reforms and ultimate aims were common to most of the programs.[9] We shall see how far these took the several Socialist parties, but the very fact that a special place was devoted in their programs to agrarian matters marked for many of these parties a departure from their former practice.

Before the First World War, and in spite of the fierce theoretical debate between orthodox Marxists and revisionists, most of them had paid little attention to agriculture. But the circumstances of the war had brought home to the peoples of Europe the importance of securing domestic food supplies; and the controls which in this field had to be brought into action during the war led to a greater awareness of the part which the state could play in promoting economic ends.[10] Moreover, there was a certain slump in ideologies; the parties which had come to power or were actively competing for it had to think less in terms of ideologies and more of how to win over, or at least how not to antagonize, the rural population. The Finnish party expressed its regret that since the independence of their country "the farmers, formerly so radical, had in part fallen under conservative agrarian influence, which had led to . . . extensive anti-Communist agitation."[11] It is instructive that of all the parties belonging to the Second International, the British Labor Party alone continued to demand the nationalization of the land as an essential condition for any agrarian reform. On the Continent the old revisionist view was getting a more careful hearing than it had before, and the case for peasant farming was being put forward anew for a twofold purpose. It was firstly a question of reconciling Socialist theory with statistical evidence, which as regards agriculture had disclosed no tendency towards concentration. Not that the old thesis of Dr. David, that smallholdings had an "organic" economic superiority over larger estates, had come to be accepted by his party friends. Most Socialists still doubted that smallholders could stand up to the competition of large farmers; in so far as they were now willing to support the peasants they wanted to secure them the technical advantages of larger units through co-operative arrangements, with the support and protection of the State.[12] It was, secondly, a question of finding a platform acceptable to the small peasants and farm laborers, who had shown no liking for the idea of nationalizing the land. Early in 1928 the Finnish Party, for instance, called together a conference of peasants, and as a result of it had set up a farmer's committee to assist the Party executive in matters relating to agriculture. The

French Socialists were characteristically cautious in their approach; while insisting that agricultural production could be intensified and rationalized only in a Socialist society, they granted that great immediate improvements could be achieved through reforms agreed upon between peasants and workers.[13]

Perhaps the ablest restatement of a Socialist agrarian policy, in the attempt to reconcile Marxist tenets with the peasant demand for private property in land, was undertaken by the Austrian Socialist Party. Otto Bauer's[14] was the most realistic and constructive approach to the peasant problem made by any Socialist in that period, and the Austrian program based on it was accepted, with local modifications, by most Social-Democratic groups in Central Europe. Its concept was made clear already in 1924 when the Party appointed a special committee to prepare an agrarian program. "Marxist Socialism has taught us," said the resolution, "that we shall be able to nationalize that which, through the great process of concentration which goes on under capitalism, had acquired a communal character within the capitalist system itself. . . . That applies to industry, to wholesale trade, to banking, but it does *not* apply to the sphere of peasant economy. The process of communal concentration of production has not been active there." To attempt to impose nationalization upon a sector of the economy where property and labor, the means of production and the producer, have not been separated by the evolution of capitalism, would mean a return to Utopian Socialism. The task of the Marxist was not to prescribe but to study and interpret economic evolution. "Today we know the tendencies in the evolution of agriculture to be quite different from what was still assumed, let us say, in the nineties, and . . . the problem has to be seen in quite a different way." This new view appeared in Bauer's general argument, which in many ways came near to the views of the Peasant groups. He admitted that peasant holdings were not losing ground and attributed this to the greater care and interest the peasants put into their work, and also to the fact that their demands were sometimes lower than even those of rural laborers.[15] That readiness to work harder and to consume less could be explained by the peasant's attachment to his land, as it explained his readiness to pay almost any price for it. "For the capitalist, property or tenancy is a means of employing his capital. . . . For the proletariat, the artisan, the small peasant, property is rather a means of employing his labor."[16] Therefore, Bauer went on to say, in words which almost echoed the Peasant writers, the excess over the normal price or rent for land which the smallholder is willing to pay may be called a "premium for independence"; though after further analysis of

the elements which go into peasant farming, Bauer also added that the conclusions of Kautsky on the question of large-scale *versus* small-scale production in agriculture were justified.[17]

The German Socialists were not quite so forthcoming and there was a significant gradation in the changes they made in their program. In the draft program adopted in 1921 they were still saying that "the large estates should not be done away with as they still offer many advantages."[18] They should preferably —reviving an old idea—be handed over to co-operatives of production. By 1927, when the Party's Congress met at Kiel and they were still clinging to Marxist terminology, the program declared that the special problems of agriculture, especially as regards improved production, might be dealt with by various state controls.[19] The real point was put, however, by Baade, who acted as rapporteur on the agrarian question. He quoted statistical evidence to show that the analysis of Dr. David had been right, and then summed up in this way: "It was recognized that in agriculture, if only because production is bound to the soil, large-scale undertakings can never acquire the same superiority as in industry. It was further recognized that in agriculture the small undertaking has certain advantages over the large one, and that the achievements of the large undertaking . . . can for the most part be more quite readily available also for the peasant farm."[20] It was not without significance that when the executives of the German party had to take refuge in Prague, after the rise of Hitler, its statements became more radical in style, if not in purpose. Control of production and prices was suggested as the appropriate means for restraining the individualism of the peasants in the interests of the community, and they therefore urged the need for a general plan for agriculture, to include among other things marketing organizations of a co-operative or public kind. The important place given to the organization of marketing was similar to the program of British Labour; the two were alike also in the absence of any reference to the class struggle, and in defining their aim as being that of protecting the interests of the whole community against sectional interests.[21]

With the general change in Socialist programs there went also a change in the policy of their parties. The main purpose was no longer the nationalization of the land, except in the British program, and the setting up of big state or co-operative farms, but the expropriation of the large estates only. For the rest, general policy contemplated a series of measures which on the one hand would give the peasant holdings a sound footing and on the other, by means of the kind of controls mentioned before, would integrate peasant farming into a planned Social-

ist economy. The agrarian program of the Austrian Party put all these points clearly. Transition to Socialism required the expropriation of large estates, as these would fulfill their technical function within the whole economy only "when the state has control over large property in land."[22] But smallholders, whether owners or tenants, were to be left undisturbed. Planning in a Socialist society would resolve the conflict between town and country. "In Socialist society the community administers on the one hand industrial production, which supplies the peasants with tools and with consumption goods, and on the other hand looks after the distribution of the products of peasant agriculture"; in that way society can regulate the share of the peasants in the national income.[23] By and large there was in these programs a greater awareness of the complexity of the agrarian sector, a fairly general agreement that agriculture did not develop in the same way as industry, and a recognition, at least in principle, of the need to study how changes in agriculture came about. There was also broad agreement on the reforms to be applied by the state or through co-operatives, including fiscal measures designed to ease the position of those who grew food without putting too great a burden on the urban population.

All these questions, and the relation between agriculture and other forms of economic activity, had been in the foreground of theoretical discussions already before 1914, but they acquired a new significance during the twenty-five years of revolution and depression which followed the First World War. And yet one can say with safety that no new Socialist theory emerged during that period. There were no fundamental changes in the application of Marxist analysis to the agrarian problem, or in the variants of the schools of thought of either Kautsky or Dr. David. The resolutions on agriculture passed by the Second Labour and Socialist International, and by the Joint Commission of the Second International and the World Federation of Trade Unions, were usually a compromise between the disparate and sometimes conflicting trends apparent in the several countries represented on those bodies. They could not therefore be expected to be either clear-cut or consistent, but they do serve as a pointer which shows the level of common agreement that it was possible to reach. One must turn to the programs of particular parties to find how each approached its particular agrarian problem; and it is worth noting especially that the difference between the countries of western and eastern Europe was now recognized from the outset. All things considered, it can be said that few Socialist parties succeeded in framing a policy that was in keeping with their theoretical ideas

as to the part which agriculture had in economic organization as a whole. Too often, moreover, mutually exclusive concepts had crept in. Planning for plenty, for instance, implied in effect a change to mixed farming as the type best suited to peasant Europe and also likely to insure the highest standard of living to both rural and urban producers; while on the other hand the striving for agricultural self-sufficiency, for reasons of defense, or out of attachment to the idea of national planning, led to the protection of the high-cost producer at home at the expense of the urban as of the rural working classes.[24]

All the parties were at one, however, in asking that more attention should be given to agrarian problems, and in admitting that the task of organizing peasants and laborers had hardly begun. It is for this element of self-criticism that the minutes of the Fourth Congress of the Second International are of some interest. On the initiative of the "Central Union of German Small Peasants and Tenants in Czechoslovakia" a two-day meeting of Socialists particularly interested in agrarian questions took place in Vienna, before the meeting of the Fourth Congress of the International, in 1931. That special gathering adopted a number of resolutions, from which a few points are worth mentioning: they asked that an international conference of small peasants should be organized before the next Congress; they asked for intensive propaganda to the end of setting up organizations of small peasants in every country; for the creation of a permanent committee of study; and—perhaps most interesting of all, as a comment on previous similar attempts—for the setting up of a permanent organization which should not be neutral but definitely Socialist. In addition to these resolutions the gathering submitted to the Executive of the Second International a draft Manifesto, which was to be an appeal to the oppressed rural classes to unite with the workers of the world; and it is not without interest that the language of the Manifesto showed a radical temper which was greatly in contrast with the usually moderate views and language of the Second International. But in any case, these efforts bore no results whatever. The general Congress did not follow up the resolutions adopted by the agrarian gathering and refused to adopt the proposed Manifesto.[25] At the same time the Congress took up a number of resolutions of an economic and technical nature, dealing with the relation between the industrial and the agricultural crisis; it proposed, apparently with only moderate confidence in their efficacy, various possible remedies, a good many of them in the field of marketing, "especially through collaboration between agricultural and consumers' co-operatives and through the extension of the division of labor as be-

tween countries."[26] The stress laid especially in the German and British programs on the need of protecting the most efficient producer suggested still a greater concern for the large farmer, who produced "cheap bread" for the market, than for the general run of smallholders. The Social-Democratic parties could not ignore the difficulties of the smallholders, but more often than not were inclined to approach the problems of these groups from an economic rather than from a social point of view.[27]

In spite of all that mental stress and the political anxiety of the inter-war period, the Socialist parties, it is evident, were incapable of drawing any potent conclusions from their own experience. When under pressure they may have taken one step backwards in doctrine and one step forward in policy, but no more. They tried desperately to keep a hold on both and succeeded in getting a firm grip on neither. The political lessons of the social and economic trends in agriculture seemed obvious enough. The victory of the Bolsheviks in Russia and the defeat of the Social-Democrats in central and western Europe had together shown that the industrial workers could not gain power, or retain their hold of it, unless they had the support of the peasant masses. The Social-Democrats, wrote Bauer, "must therefore face the agrarian problem in a quite different way from the way they looked at it during the agrarian debates of the nineties." Bauer therefore called for a necessary alliance between workers and peasants, but he too was tripped up by the Marxist assumptions in the Socialist view. To be real and solid such an alliance would have meant that the Socialists must drop all serious effort to line up the poor peasants and laborers against the rich peasants. But in fact Bauer at the same time still pinned his hopes on the assumed growing social differentiation in the villages; he expected it to lead to the emancipation of the small peasants and laborers from the leadership of the richer peasants, and thus prepare the ground for a new political alignment. Contradictions such as these really made all prospect of joint action hopeless.

The Socialist parties also meant to make a special effort to attract and organize the landless agricultural laborers. The German, the British and other programs paid great attention to the need of extending measures of social improvement and security to farm laborers, and resolutions to that effect were adopted regularly at meetings of the Second International. But even that was to prove a doubtful quest. In Germany, for instance, where trade unions of agricultural laborers had grown important after 1918, these unions resisted the ideas and plans of the urban

Socialists because they would endanger the means of existence of their members. They asked in effect that the large estates, which gave them employment, should be preserved, even if they were in the hands of Junkers. At a Party Congress in Kiel, in 1927, an unholy bargain was concluded between the two trends; as the price of retaining the laborers' organization within the fold the Congress accepted an agrarian program which in effect was to leave Prussian agriculture as it was.[28]

Apart from the hopes based on the spreading of class division to the village, which, it was assumed, would make political union between the poor in town and country easier, the main weight for the infusion of Socialism into agriculture was placed on ideas for the control of production and marketing through Socialist planning. That, it will be recalled, was in keeping with the instructions of Engels, which forebade the granting of any favors to the peasants, beyond minor mitigations of their lot, and especially any distribution of land to them, unless and until the "commanding heights" in economic life, of an essentially urban character, were safely in Socialist hands. As to giving the peasants land, actually such a policy was not envisaged by western and central Europe Marxists "before the acceptance of the 1928 program of the Comintern."[29] While, therefore, they talked about the need of meeting the claims of the peasants, the German, Austrian, and other western programs really were preoccupied with measures intended to raise agricultural productivity and with such as would help agricultural laborers. Land was not to be given to the peasants until, through Socialist controls, it could be devoid of the characteristics of peasant property. The paradox was too general to be merely a local inconsistency. It appeared indeed clearly in the peculiar position of the English movement. Peasants are not found in England any more, except the few in Wales,[30] and the Labour movement has never been dogmatically Marxist; but on the other hand it has been adamant in demanding the nationalization of the land, at any rate until it came to power. Since then Labour policy has shown how unfitting had been its theory in relation to agrarian matters. In the last election the Minister of Agriculture strenuously denounced as a "travesty of truth" any suggestion that Labour intended to nationalize the land;[31] and in general the Party's agricultural policy has in every respect tended to consolidate the land rights and profits of capitalist farming.[32]

The only point that interests us here is the way in which the old theoretical ideas dissolved under the pressure of practical problems. Because the first were so artificial the second have led in the West to monopolistic protection for capitalist farming; and, above all, to that basic differentiation between indus-

trial and agrarian policy which Marxism could never conceive but which the Peasant leaders had always claimed to be inevitable. If the western Socialist parties had between the Wars to be concerned less with dogma and more with ways of meeting the needs of the moment, the tendency inevitably grew stronger after the Second World War. These parties showed less inclination than ever to complicate through a dogmatic approach problems which were pressing and difficult enough to solve even on their merits. Marxist Socialist principles did not fit many of the facts and needs of the modern world, and in particular they did not fit the needs of agrarian economy and life. Hence in practice they had in the agrarian field to be strained or shelved, but no new theory has so far taken their place. Writing on the "reduction" of large property and the development of small and medium property, the German Socialist leader, Dr. Kurt Schumacher, has said: "In agriculture, in craft work, in manufacture and trade, the small and medium economy have an important part to play in the economic organization pursued by Social Democracy, and should be allowed to develop within those limits."[33] All that was simply the pragmatic admission of political leaders who in power, or on its threshold, found themselves caught, as would-be Marxists, in a dilemma—caught between a theory which they were loath to abandon and an "objective situation" to which they could not make the theory fit.

The variation in Socialist attitude, as noted earlier, was evident already before 1914 in differences between the Social-Democratic parties in western and central Europe and those further East. In both sections the mass of their followers was made up of factory workers, while urban intellectuals provided the leadership. The difference lay partly in the numerical strength of the parties and the proportion of skilled workers among their numbers, partly in the differing intellectual traditions that came out of Germany and Russia. The further one went eastwards, apart from a few industrial centers, the closer were the ties between factory and village. The villages provided a seasonal labor reserve which permanently depressed wages; hence the lot of the urban unskilled workers and of the agricultural laborers and very poor peasants was very much bound together. That close link between village and factory was reflected also in the political field. In the East the Russians tried to win for the revolutionary movement the lower strata of the countryside, the medium and small peasants and the rural laborers. Most of the western leaders, in accordance with the views of Marx, had at first regarded all the peasantry as a hope-

less, reactionary class unfit for partnership with the workers. On the whole the Austrian, Czech and Hungarian Socialist groups in the years before the war and revolution had followed that German attitude; they had concentrated their efforts on organizing the rapidly growing urban proletariat and had shown little interest in the way the peasantry was exploited. In Rumania and the south-Slav countries the Socialist groups had in this matter been influenced rather by Russian ideas, especially the "narrow" Socialists who formed the majority of the Bulgarian Party, while the Polish party had elements of both types. When a chance of democratic action came their way, after the First World War, the eastern Social-Democratic parties had little strength or influence. In Hungary and in Poland it is true the Social-Democrats were then the only legally organized working-class group, but their freedom of action was severely restricted.

The limited strength of these parties was not without influence on their attitude towards the peasants in the period between the two Wars. Many of their new agrarian programs showed little trace of the basic concepts of Marxism, even Marxist terminology being often avoided. On the face of it these programs had little in them that was specifically Socialist, but a good deal that was meant to attract the peasants and rural laborers, to help the peasants to secure the advantages of technical improvements in their farming and an increased share of the national income. In so far as these programs tried to offer a wider social and economic interpretation of peasant property, as for instance in the carefully worked out program of the Polish party,[34] so as to justify their broader attitude, their arguments were hardly distinguishable from those advanced by the Peasant parties of their time and place. The Austrian, Czech, and Polish programs differed from western programs in the greater stress they laid on the class-struggle within the village, and the difference they made between measures of immediate reform and the steps which eventually would set free the workers in factory and field through the establishment of a Socialist society. It was not only that the eastern Socialist groups were less strong than those of western Europe, but that they were closer to problems which affected agriculture in general and the peasants in particular.

The fact that most of eastern agriculture was carried on on a subsistence basis did not save it from the impact of the economic crisis of the thirties. The effects of the crisis were perhaps less direct and obvious than in the West, but the discussions of that period showed how anxiously the eastern Socialists were trying to unravel the circumstances which affected the

economic well-being of their countries. They were no more successful in this than their western fellows; as Socialists they had indeed the more difficult task of having to take into account also the special position of agrarian economies in what had become a contest with industrial pressure on prices. It is interesting to find that already in the first years of the Second International their special position had been sufficiently recognized to lead the Socialist parties from south-eastern Europe to get together for the purpose of discussing problems common to their region. At the second of these Socialist Balkan conferences, which met in Prague in June, 1925, before the full Congress of the International that August, delegates voiced the need to "discuss the special problems of the Near East, which are totally different from the questions in western Europe today." They explained that their part of Europe found itself in a different stage of the revolutionary process: their peoples were only then passing through the stage of bourgeois revolution, with all its accompanying phenomena, which necessarily included the redistribution of land and the consolidation of private property among the peasants.[35]

But while the agrarian programs of the eastern parties may have gone rather further than those of the western Socialists, relatively their failure to face the realities of the political situation was much graver. They had no hope or prospect of ever acquiring power by their own strength, no hope indeed of even protecting the social and political position of their urban followers without the support of the much stronger Peasant parties. Without that, and while still holding in the main to their Marxist position, they were doomed to oscillate between impotence or collaboration with more extreme forces on either their Right or their Left. So obvious was this dilemma that the Rumanian Peasant leader, Madgearu, was able to analyze it in the thirties in a strikingly prophetic passage. Madgearu pointed out that as for a long time to come the Socialists could not hope to capture the peasant masses, they were condemned to a passive role, unless some of their leaders were tempted into collaborating with the capitalist oligarchy. That would inevitably break the unity of the Socialist movement and thereby strengthen the revolutionary syndicalist or Communist currents, which were antagonistic to political democracy. But any such move towards a proletarian dictatorship would in its turn provoke a reaction from the self-styled parties of "social harmony," which would strive to establish a dictatorship of the Right. "Whoever has closely observed the course of events in recent years," wrote Madgearu, "can foresee the fate of the Rumanian people if it were to be their lot to oscillate between the rule of the

financial oligarchy in a democratic form and the rule of the same financial oligarchy using the methods of political dictatorship, whenever it felt itself in danger of being ousted by a dictatorship of the proletariat. Cannot the entry of the Peasant movement into the political arena give instead a new direction to our social evolution?"[36]

Madgearu, it will be seen, was not criticizing the Social-Democratic parties on theoretical grounds, as the Populists had formerly done, but as a political leader facing a pressing political situation. He realized that under existing conditions the dogmatic isolationism of the Socialists was simply leaving the way wide open for extremist moves from either Right or Left, as it made a resolute democratic majority more difficult to achieve. His words seemed, therefore, less a criticism than a plea for the co-operation of the two sections of the working masses. The reply—especially interesting because it was given in the same context on the same occasion, in a theoretical debate—came from the leader of the Rumanian Socialists. It simply repeated the traditional Socialist-Marxist view that the peasant "cannot be a factor of progress as producer, cannot take up new methods of production, cannot enrich Society. The peasantry has no immediate interest in changing the existing social course. By its individual property, its isolated work, in narrow horizon, it forms a conservative element, almost the most conservative element in contemporary society."[37] Not all Socialist leaders were so intransigent, or not always, but all of them were consistent in maintaining their doctrinal aloofness, even when it could not possibly bring them political independence. The eastern Socialists were then in a highly vulnerable state politically; they were pressed between two extreme currents which in countries like Hungary followed upon each other at once, and were not long in appearing in Bulgaria and Poland and elsewhere. The inability of even the abler among them to face this problem is all the more revealing. There was among them much intellectual searching, in Poland and Rumania especially, but not intellectual progress on these issues. They produced hardly anything that had not been considered and proposed already by earlier Socialists for many a long year.

In Rumania, particularly, the Party had attracted some of the ablest among younger intellectuals, who in their writings showed themselves to be strongly under the influence of the ideas of Dobrogeanu-Gherea. They obviously felt that some revision of the Marxist view was necessary as regards the part to be played by the peasants in a revolution. They admitted that the post-war agrarian movements in eastern Europe, as the retreat to the N.E.P. had already admitted in Soviet Russia,

had shown how dangerous it was to let the peasants develop anti-proletarian sentiments. But all they could say in the end was that allies for the workers had somehow to be found in the village, and that while the peasants could not be matured into Socialists, this ultimate problem should in the meanwhile not prevent co-operation with them. "If with respect to the future profound theoretical differences divide us from the Peasants, in regard to immediate political action we find ourselves in full agreement: both political organizations seek to remove the oligarchic system of government."[38] That was not a very novel conclusion, and in any case the writer finally threw the whole case away by insisting that, as a Socialist revolution could be achieved only in the ripe economic conditions prevailing in the West, the principal task of Rumanian Socialism was to foster the development of capitalism.

It will be seen that in the last analysis Gherea's interpretation of Marxism, though an important advance upon western views, was unable to provide eastern Socialists with an adequate agrarian theory. The insufficiency of this conception became clearer as the years went by. Reforms in the economic and political fields were gradually removing the "neo-servile" elements which Gherea had found and analyzed in Rumanian society, and the land reforms especially had powerfully contributed towards this. Yet the Socialist theorists of the nineteen-twenties and nineteen-thirties continued to look upon the existing state of things as a state of oligarchic capitalism, and to aspire simply to its removal so as to open the way for bourgeois capitalism. They attacked the servitudes still weighing upon the peasants, but expected the remedy to lie in capitalist development on the western model, which also meant implicitly that they did not believe in the permanency of a peasant system on the land. While therefore the land reforms after the First World War may have been welcome to them as serving to break the old oligarchy, the Socialists could not have expected or wanted those reforms to give a solid foundation to the new peasantry. Enmeshed in such inconsistencies and uncertainties they failed in the end to work out any coherent agrarian program. Throughout the inter-war period and throughout the region, at their Congresses and in their writings, the Socialist leaders kept on insisting on the importance of an agrarian policy and on the need of coming to an understanding with the Peasants. But their dogmatic shackles never allowed them to make the necessary moves while it was still possible and useful to do so.[39] Alone the Polish party came to a working arrangement with the Peasants in the late thirties, too late to affect the country's policy before the war overwhelmed it.

The fruit of that political division was reaped very soon after the Second World War. It is a short story with a quick ending. During the war years Socialists and Peasants worked for national and other reasons with the old regimes; and all the Socialist groups, but only some of the Peasant groups, joined in the "united front" governments which at the end of the war took over the eastern countries and in which Communists played a leading part. In no instance, either during the war or after its end, did Socialists and Peasants, who between them could have commanded a substantial majority, come together to form a democratic front. On the other hand, the Socialists were tied to the Communists by doctrinal bonds, and the Communists were tied to Moscow. The degree to which Communist influence entered into the politics of the eastern governments of "national unity" varied somewhat from country to country, but in a way which reflected more the tactics of Moscow than local circumstances.[40] When the "united front" began to crack the Socialists once again therefore found themselves pitted against the Peasants. The Czech Socialists indeed had inexplicably taken the initiative in the strange decision which made the large Czechoslovakia Agrarian Party illegal from the start. In Poland, in Hungary, in Bulgaria, the Marxist groups at first temporized and brought the Peasant parties also into the mixed Governments set up at the end of the War. But before very long in every instance, through the position they had taken all along, the Social-Democrats found themselves, willingly or not, sharing in the moves which, in one way or another, led first to the ousting of the Peasant representatives from government, and then to the destruction of the Peasant parties and organizations altogether.[41]

Chapter 13

The "Scientific" Dictators: The Phase of the Comintern

CONDITIONS IN Central and Eastern Europe at the end of the Second World War gave the Marxist groups their chance to move into action against the peasants of eastern Europe outside Russia. The aftermath of the First World War had been essentially still a phase of national revolution: the old imperial regimes had disintegrated, many of their provinces were made into independent states, or frontiers of existing states were re-

drawn to fit the lines of nationality more closely. The wake of the Second World War was essentially one of social revolution, causing the national regimes set up only a generation earlier to collapse and be radically reshaped. The revolutionary social ferment had indeed been at work throughout the inter-war period; Fascism and Nazism were as revolutionary as the left wing currents in their disregard of constitutional and contractual rights, of established law and custom. In the matter of such brash pragmatism there was little to choose between revolutionary pressure from Right or Left. But the Right, which had had the better of it till the nineteen-forties, was destroyed or on the run everywhere after the War; whereas the Soviet regime, which after 1918 had been hard put to it to keep its hold within Russia, after 1945 found itself in a position to break out of Russia for a revolutionary offensive far beyond her borders.

The relation of this revolutionary sweep to Marxism as a doctrine, which it was supposed to be spreading, was in keeping with the now established Soviet line. While professing strict adherence to Marxist theory, the Bolshevik group had had to do violence to not a few of its tenets when presented with the chance of taking over the government of Russia. From the moment and in the measure in which the Soviet rulers were presented now with the opportunity of extending their influence beyond Russia, into countries whose political and social conditions were even less ripe for Marxism, let alone for Russian leadership, the gap between Marxism and Soviet Communism became correspondingly wider. Moreover, the position of vantage which the Soviet rulers were thus able to acquire in the eastern half of the Continent also brought about, and very promptly, a hardening of their line of action. It would seem true to say that, for the time being, the ideological conflict was stifled and relegated to the side lines; even the domestic arguments as to the correct interpretation of Marx or Lenin, which had made Communism so alive in the twenties and thirties, were stilled. The issue for the moment was no longer one of Marxist doctrine versus Populist or Peasant doctrine, but of Soviet Communism as a power against all opposition to it. The Communist hierarchy now set itself up not only against bourgeois-capitalist and peasant opposition, but also against the Socialist-Marxist opposition; indeed, also against Communist-Marxist groups and elements, if they did not conform to the directives of the small but supreme Soviet caucus.

Whatever the theoretical pretenses that still surrounded it, or the more distant revolutionary aspirations that may possibly justify it, the issue thus narrowed down to a sheer question of

power. As this study is concerned with a conflict not of power but of ideologies, it would almost seem that our theme is so far exhausted. But the peasant question has played so large a part in the troubled affairs of eastern Europe after the Second World War, that it seems worth describing, however briefly, how the Marxist agrarian tenets fared in more recent events and how the several groups stood in this matter. If in one sense these latest events seem to have brought the Marxist story to an end, it still has to be as regards theory an inconclusive end. For what has happened in eastern Europe could be taken either as proof that Marx had been right, in that his agrarian prescription appears on the way to being fulfilled, or as proof that he had been wrong, in that nowhere and in no instance did this come about through the unfolding of economic evolution. Always his economic formula has had to be imposed, and it could be imposed only after the destruction of all potential political opposition. The other aspect worth noting is that the formula has been imposed by a strangely and yet characteristically circuitous approach. At no time have the Communist groups abandoned the agrarian theory of Marx or modified it in the letter; but equally at no time have they allowed it to stand in the way of their revolutionary policy and action.

A frontal attack was even less possible than in the first years of the Russian revolution. The peasants, as they had emerged from the Second World War, faced the new regimes with a much stiffer problem than did the old ruling groups. The former rulers were summarily "liquidated" or put to flight; the middle classes, deprived of property and of chances of employment, were rapidly reduced to poverty and impotence through a process of attrition; and the Socialists, who had first been used as partners in this revolutionary offensive, were later themselves suppressed everywhere as political groups with an individuality and standing of their own. The peasants, however, could neither be crushed like the middle class nor cowed and absorbed like the Socialists. A variety of means had, therefore, to be brought into action for subduing them. Great efforts were made to split them into kulaks and small peasants, while preaching working-class unity to the latter; the Peasant parties were broken up while left-wing peasant groups were set up linked to the Communist organization; land was distributed to poor peasants or landless laborers, to be followed soon by pressure for collectivized farming, while the richer peasants were gradually reduced in means and prospects. All these actions merely repeated, with local adaptations, what at various stages had already been done in Soviet Russia. As earlier in Russia, the policy alternated between concessions intended to

"soften" the peasants and drastic steps for bringing them to heel. As in Russia, there was no clear and continuous line of policy one way or the other: the line was played out or reeled in sharply as the tactics of the moment seemed to demand. Sometimes different things were done at the same time in different places; or a firm ideological restatement of the Marxian thesis was launched at the same time as the peasants were being cajoled in practice. But when it came to big steps, as at one time the initiation of the Popular Fronts, or, most recently of all, the drive for collectivization, the moves were noticeably uniform in purpose and timing.

Communist discussion between the wars of the agrarian problem and of the way to deal with the peasants showed no weakening on the fundamental ideas of Marxist Socialism. During the N.E.P. period and periodically afterwards these discussions, and indeed the struggle within the movement, centered rather on the tactical question of "how" and "when." Most Communists held that every agrarian program must aim at increasing the class-consciousness of the laborers and small peasants in their struggle against the village petty bourgeoisie; whether these programs would be effective or not in this respect was the test by which they were to be judged. It was indeed from that angle that orthodox Marxism had in earlier years opposed the attempt of the revisionists to work out a program which would protect and conciliate the peasants as a whole. Yet when inquests were held on the failure of both Communists and Socialists to win over the peasants to their side in the years of depression, the parties vied with each other in advocating just such measures of protection; taking into account the difference in the position of the more substantial peasants, who had a surplus for the market, and that of the small peasants and landless laborers with their particular needs in the way of protection. The debate as to the most propitious agrarian policy came sharply to life again when the reconstruction of the peasant countries of eastern Europe loomed ahead at the end of the Second World War. Argument and counter-argument, one could almost say quotation and counter-quotation, kept close to the line of thought of those who ruled Soviet Russia and also the Third International, and the policy of the new eastern regimes towards the land and the peasants was influenced and shaped by Russian experience. They allowed or rather helped the peasants to take over the land of large estates and farms, they allowed a period of free economic action, comparable to the N.E.P. period in Russia, but finally took a sharp turn with a relentless drive towards the abolition of private property, the nationalization of all industry, and the collectivization of agri-

culture. The only difference from the way that things had happened in Soviet Russia was that delaying differences of view as to the right policy were no longer tolerated, and that in the other peasant countries those several phases were now telescoped into a much shorter space of time.

As mentioned on an earlier page, the struggle for collectivization in the thirties had been in Russia also the occasion for much theoretical heart-searching on the implications of the agrarian theory of Marx. From 1929 onwards the economic crisis, especially in its agrarian aspects, came to play a large part in this debate, and Marxist analysis was variously adapted with reference to the evolution of agriculture in industrial countries.[42] It was above all the conditions in the neighboring peasant countries, however, so close to Russian conditions in respect of class and economic structure, that received continuous and growing attention. The International Agrarian Institute in Moscow published in 1933 a collection of essays on *Marx and the Agrarian Question* which endeavored to restate the Marxist view in the light of Russian experience.[43] The volume amounted in the first place to an attack, as sustained as it was unoriginal, on the reformist Socialists, whom it now dubbed "social Fascists." It denied the latter's view that the small farm was economically stable and showed a greater power to resist the effects of the crisis; as against this it maintained that with the spread of capitalism the small farmer was doomed, for the reasons so often adduced before. It admitted that in agriculture the "law of the superiority of large-scale enterprise" was subject to more varied and stricter qualifications than in industry, taking into account especially different branches of agriculture and differences in social and economic conditions; but insisted that in the main branches of agricultural production, corn-growing and live-stock farming, that superiority was an undisputed fact. This was proved by statistics which showed that in most countries the larger farm units were either increasing or at least held their own; and as these units, together with the banks, really controlled the market for agricultural produce, small holdings were in effect subjected to this economic and financial concentration, even when they were in a majority. Moreover, the small peasants were also exploited by the capitalist town, which to an increasing degree had taken over the production of goods formerly made in the village, and which through the working of the price "scissors" was robbing the village of its due reward for its labors. Thus the peasant was exploited from two sides, by the large capitalist farm and by the urban capitalist industry. The argument of the "social Fascists" that the peasant had certain advantages

over the large farmer, because of his individual interest and enterprise, had been exposed as fallacious time and again by Lenin and by Stalin, who had shown that the peasant survived only by restricting his consumption and by overworking.[44]

The volume also paid attention to social differentiation on the land. It claimed that class differentiation was growing and described it as a process of the greatest social significance when a democratic peasant revolution was approaching. Perhaps this was really a more pressing theme than the technical argument. Russian agrarian policy had hardly had the evolutionary character, and certainly not yet sufficient experience, to be able to contribute any conclusive evidence towards Marx's agrarian theory. Their political experience, on the other hand, had taught the Soviet hierachy a great deal about the tactical problems of revolutionary action in peasant countries, and it was these revolutionary lessons, rather than agrarian theory, which they set themselves to pass on by way of instruction, or instructions, to the Communist leadership in central and eastern Europe. These Communist groups were living in some anxiety under the shadow both of the growth of Fascism and of the economic crisis. The Third International was stressing the importance of linking a working-class revolution with a peasant rising, and the tactics of the day were dictated by the problem of an alliance of peasantry and proletariat in the countries of eastern Europe, and of the "petty bourgeois" peasant farmers and the proletariat in the western countries. Again and again in Communist writings and speeches it was stressed that to secure the co-operation of the peasants must remain the first aim of the parties, and that economic analysis and political propaganda must both be adjusted to this purpose.

That injunction provided indeed the chart for repeated changes in attitude and policy on the agrarian question. While the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, in 1928, still extolled the new Russian program for collectivization (with comments for the use of Communist parties in other countries), the Seventh Congress in 1935 spoke as it were with two voices on agrarian matters.[45] In the first part of the proceedings "the consequences of sectarian mistakes" were discussed by the German leader, Pieck. He analyzed the failure of the Communist parties to grasp the meaning of the crisis which had set in since 1929 and the opening it offered for a revolutionary movement in the agrarian countries. The policy of the capitalist sector was hastening the decline of peasant farming, but the Communists had failed to realize that the class struggle had entered a new phase. They were directly responsible for what was defective in the organization of the masses, because their doctrinaire rigidity

had caused them to neglect the fight to secure allies for themselves. "The backwardness of our work in winning allies for the proletariat among the peasants and the lower middle classes was strongly felt . . . If we exclude Poland and the Balkan countries, the Communists before the outbreak of the crisis had hardly passed beyond the stage of merely recognizing in principle the necessity of working among the urban and rural petty bourgeois masses."[46] In Germany, Herr Pieck said, where the discontent of the peasants was so strong as to have become a political force, the Communist Party put forward in 1931 a program with proposals for help, of the kind which had been the stock-in-trade of the Socialist Party for years. Not unnaturally, the peasants preferred to turn to a party which promised them higher prices and agricultural improvements without overthrowing capitalism. The Party, he added, had equally failed to capitalize on the widespread unrest among farmers in France and the U.S.A. In the subsequent discussion, largely devoted to attacks on Fascist agrarian policy, the Bulgarian Dimitrov underlined Pieck's criticism of their own parties: "We must be enemies of cut-and-dried schemes. We must take into account the concrete situation of each moment in each place. . . ."[47] The lessons of earlier failures must be learned. Manuilsky emphasized this, in a speech which dwelt on the new stage in the progress of the proletarian revolution, by quoting Lenin's warning that unless they had twenty years of proper relations with the peasants, so as to make sure of a proletarian victory on a world-wide scale, they would have to face twenty to forty years of Fascist terror.

The mistakes of the Communist parties in this difficult issue were not always of their own making. They had to steer continuously between orthodox Marxist theory, the directives they received through the Third International, and the situation they had to face at any one moment in their own countries. It was not easy to achieve consistency or effectiveness when instructions and conditions were apt to fluctuate greatly or to conflict with each other. In eastern Europe, especially, Lenin's ideas still had a decisive influence in the inter-war period and the Communist groups tried to reflect faithfully the directives of the Comintern. The Comintern itself took a great deal of interest in the peasant question as a necessary adjunct to revolutionary action. We have mentioned that in 1923 a Peasant International was established in Moscow, in an effort to rally the peasantry to the Communist movement and to combat the influence of the Peasant parties gathered in their own Green International. The Moscow organization made small headway among the peasants, largely because it had little to offer them,

partly because the time was hardly propitious for revolutionary action; the land reforms, for the time being at any rate, had taken much of the sting out of peasant discontent.

In the circumstances the Communists could not make up their minds whether to continue the attack against the ruling oligarchy with the whole of the peasantry, which would have brought them to the side of the Peasant parties, or to turn their attack against the kulaks and in apparent support of the poor peasants, in conformity with the Soviet line in Russia. Actually they succeeded in doing little either way, and they received little help towards clarifying their problem from Moscow. In 1924 the Moscow Praesidium of the International Peasant Council sent an appeal to Rumanian and other peasants asking that all estate should be expropriated at once without compensation, that all factories be put under the control of the workers, and calling upon the peasants to refuse to pay taxes for armaments and, together with the workers, to take over all power in alliance with the Soviet Union. That may have been stirring as a call to revolution, but was hardly a program to move the peasants.[48] It was evidently inspired by fears for the safety of the Soviet Union; but when a few years later the Rumanian Communist Party interpreted its own role as that of looking after that safety, it merely succeeded in getting itself severely rebuked. The Party's official paper had written in 1931 that to enlist the peasants in defense of the Soviet Union and against imperialist aggressiveness, it was necessary to penetrate the village. "At the present moment the peasant is the victim of a terrible economic and political crisis. . . . The questions of usury and taxation, and of the acceleration of the process of differentiation and proletarization in the village must all be discounted by our Party in favor of its work of winning over the peasant masses." The Comintern promptly pointed out that by showing concern for the crisis which was blowing against the village in general, the authors of the article had fallen into the "Right-opportunist" conception of the peasantry as a class as a whole, and that the Communist parties could hardly base themselves on the kulaks in their struggle against "imperialist" intervention. The Party should address itself rather to the village poor, and the Comintern invited its followers to undertake a campaign with a slogan attacking the lies about Soviet dumping—a slogan which was hardly likely to rouse enthusiasm among the hard-pressed eastern peasants.[49]

Equally perplexing for the Communist leadership in the other peasant countries was the question of collectivization. At the very time when in Soviet Russia the collectivization of agriculture was being pushed to a head, eastern Communists were

apparently directed to keep it out of their programs. In an article published in 1931 the Bulgarian Kolarov wrote that "in the capitalist countries the collectivization of agriculture cannot take the place of the struggle for land without compensation. Collectivization must come on a plane with the exposition of the lies and slanders concerning the U.S.S.R."—comparing the success of agriculture there with the agrarian crisis in the capitalist countries. For the rest, the task of the Communist parties in agrarian countries must be to organize and lead strikes of agricultural laborers, to support the revolutionary struggle of the poor peasants, and to grasp the differentiation which was going on in the village, and especially the role of the medium peasants who must be neutralized or won over.[50] A more definite shift in Communist agrarian policy came in 1935 with the inception of the idea of the popular front. The ultimate aims of Socialism were not renounced, but a distinction was drawn between Socialist reforms as such and reforms designed to restore democracy. The militant revolutionary note of the earlier pronouncements was dimmed. Again the change in attitude was indicated in an article which appeared in the *Communist International* and reflected the party line adopted by the Seventh Congress of the Comintern. The article criticized, for instance, the Rumanian Socialists for their pessimism about revolutionary prospects in Rumania, and called for a democratic bloc of all anti-Fascist groups, including the bourgeois parties: it even went so far as to describe the National Peasant Party as "one of the biggest mass democratic forces in Rumania."[51] Yet whatever the nature of the theoretical analysis and arguments put forward during that period, such concrete proposals as accompanied them were revisionist rather than Marxist. Their immediate concern was simply with driving away Fascism and restoring a more tolerant bourgeois society.

But again it is worth noting, to show the versatility of the Communist attitude, that when speaking about the same time to fellow Communists at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, Mr. Manuilsky set himself to extol the technical and social achievements of Soviet agrarian policy, and even ventured to prophesy the triumph of collectivization. "The victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. is setting in motion the peasant masses suffering under the crisis. They are beginning to realize the very nature of small peasant property, which prevents the use of complex machinery and makes farming unprofitable. By amalgamating the small farms, the U.S.S.R. has shown the way to overcome the *contradiction between low technique* in agriculture and *high technique* in industry,

and has raised the value of peasant labor." Class division in the village, Mr. Manuilsky went on to say, had also been overcome by the elimination of the kulaks. "The future achievements of collectivization in the U.S.S.R. will more and more break down the anti-Socialist prejudices of the peasants in the capitalist countries."[52] In explaining the Communist program for the benefit of the eastern countries, however, one of the leading theorists of the Rumanian Party, Pătrăscanu (who after the Second World War was to be Minister of Justice until 1948),[53] relied rather upon the ideas worked out by Lenin about 1900. While carrying within itself the seed of conflict between kulak and small peasant, the whole of the peasantry was the enemy of large property, even if for different reasons. In some European states peasant solidarity was no longer possible, but in Rumania and other eastern countries the peasants, rich and poor alike, were still animated by a common antagonism to the ruling oligarchy.[54]

The Popular Front line was naturally encouraged during the War. Such evidence as there is suggested that the Communists were not prepared for taking direct action at the end of the War, and that they had no intention at that time of pitting the proletariat against the peasants. Indeed, there is some evidence to show that the main anxiety of the Soviet leaders was not to antagonize the peasants in the neighboring countries. The importance of these countries to Soviet Russia can be explained by the observation often made in Stalin's speeches and writings, that the Russian civil war was won by Lenin because, by securing peasant support, he converted the peasantry from a "reserve of the bourgeoisie," which might be used to defend capitalist interests, into a "reserve of the proletariat" which helped to smash the bourgeoisie. The point would hardly be lost on Marshal Stalin while he was engaged in the grim struggle of the war. He showed how greatly it was in his mind when he told Mr. Churchill in 1944 that his battle with the peasants had been a more perilous and formidable undertaking than the battle for Stalingrad.[55] When Harry Hopkins, as the envoy of President Roosevelt, went to Moscow in May, 1945, one of the most delicate issues he had to discuss was the future regime in Poland. Marshal Stalin apparently remarked to him that "any talk of an intention to Sovietize Poland was stupid"; "even the Polish leaders," he said, "some of whom were Communists, were against the Soviet system since the Polish people did not desire collective farms or other aspects of the Soviet system." Such a system could only develop from within on the basis of a set of conditions which were not then present in Poland.[56]

That suggests that the Communist hierarchy did not even contemplate then a one-sided bid for power, unless conditions were propitious. There is no doubt, in any case, that all the moves were guided from Moscow, and there is evidence that when the Soviet armies first occupied territory in the eastern peasant countries they did not attempt to use the peasants against the existing regimes. But things were moving fast: Communist control in Poland was being organized from Moscow; in Bulgaria it was installed by the Soviet armies; and when in January 1945, two leading Rumanian Communists, Anna Pauker and Gheorghiu-Dej visited Moscow, they must have been instructed to take action, for shortly after their return the so-called National Democratic Front made a bid for power on the basis of its program. Most of the points in this program were of a political nature, relating to continued participation in the war and to relations with Soviet Russia, but the demand for a radical agrarian reform was given a high place in it; and it was not long before the Lennist theme of the class struggle in the village was brought to the fore again.[57] Further West, in territory under direct Soviet control, land reform was linked directly to political action. In a manifesto of September, 1945, the German Communist Party declared that it looked upon the "execution of a democratic land reform as the most important foundation for the development of a democratic regime."[58] When later the Socialist Unity Party was formed in the Soviet zone it demanded, in accordance with revolutionary Marxism, the expropriation of all estates without compensation, but it also borrowed from the Social-Democrats the arguments of the revisionists in favor of the encouragement of peasant farming. They went even further than the Social-Democrats in their defense of private property in the agrarian sector and never mentioned the forms of socialized agriculture that were being enforced in Soviet Russia.

Their frequently expressed official view was that Socialism did not follow the same course everywhere. Russia had labored under special conditions, but in Germany private peasant ownership would be maintained for ever.[59] The Communist attitude in western Europe can perhaps best be judged in two countries, France and Italy, which still have a considerable peasantry, and where Communism also enjoyed mass support, while Soviet influence was not present. In both countries the Communists have made great efforts to win influence in the countryside, especially among landless laborers and peasant tenants, who themselves hope to become peasant owners, but with a policy appealing to the peasants as a whole. In the elections of

1945 in France the Communists proclaimed their absolute support of private property in land and attacked the "fertilizers' monopoly";[60] and leaving the Socialists to campaign for "cheap bread," the Communists promised peasants better prices and freedom from control. They recognized that while socially the peasant was conservative, politically he was radical, and the Communists tried to enlist his radicalism; and many peasants must have voted Communist in the south, though in France the peasants are a power in themselves.[61] In Italy, one characteristic of the countryside is the existence of a large rural proletariat, landless laborers and sharecroppers; Italy was the one western country in which Socialism long ago got a footing on the land, among the laborers of the Po Valley, Emilia-Romagna and Apulia. These are now largely Communist; and after apparently reaching saturation point in the industrial and rural areas of the north, the Communists since the War have been especially active in the rural south and elsewhere, stirring up the hard-driven sharecroppers and poorer peasants to take possession of the large estates. They have taken the lead in a drive for land reform, the needs of the countryside coloring their policy strongly, and have gained in return some influence even in traditionally Catholic strongholds.[62] In all these instances the local tactical problem has given the line, yet the line would seem to have been prescribed from a central focus. When not long ago, in December 1948, the Bulgarian leader Dimitrov announced the policy which was to transform Bulgaria into a thorough "People's Democracy," he said in so many words that the policy of the Bulgarian Communist Party had been influenced by Stalin, "who personally helped us with his advice."[63]

Chapter 14

The "Scientific" Dictators: The Phase of the Cominform

FOR THE groups associated in the Comintern the inter-war period had been a time of testing the ground. The policy of "Socialism in one country" had to be consolidated, and that led externally to the policy of the "popular front," as a protection against the spreading Fascist and especially Nazi flood. In the end, Nazism and the dictators of eastern Europe merely helped to clear the ground for Soviet predominance. When the collapse

came the way was open again to the more radical popular forces. But the workers' groupings, the Socialist parties, except that of Czechoslovakia, hardly counted; they were too closely identified with the Marxian outlook and attitude to be in a position to oppose the Communists in matters of general policy, and too weak, without peasant support, to be able to stand up to their methods. Throughout the region the peasants were left as the only strong competitor, and they were an uncertain factor. The Communists took care, therefore, not to come into collision with them. They compromised with the peasant groups in the political field, while tempting the peasant masses with economic favors, always guided by the experience of Soviet Russia.

The peasants had to be neutralized before any attempt was made to break their strength. Wherever the Communists secured political control at the end of the Second World War their tactics and measures were clearly designed towards that ultimate end. While gathering control increasingly into their hands and keeping the peasant organizations in a state of suspense, they pushed through quickly a second wave of land reforms for the benefit of the poor or landless peasants, as one means of spreading division in the village. At first sight such utter negation of Marx's doctrine may seem perplexing, all the more as by then the Marxist formula had been enforced in Soviet Russia, and Soviet Russia was dominant throughout the eastern region. But Communist policy has always to be seen less in terms of theory than of tactics, and tactically their agrarian policy in 1944-45 was the same as Lenin's in 1917.

As between 1917 and 1945 there were however certain differences which tended to confirm the tactical nature of the new policy. In 1917 the peasants had taken things into their own hands and had occupied the land, and the insecure Bolshevik regime could do little else than submit to the accomplished fact; in 1945 the Communists themselves handed over the land to the peasants, even in eastern Germany, which was then under Russian military authority. Moreover, while an important purpose of the new reforms was to destroy the remnants of the landed oligarchy throughout eastern Europe, the land was not nationalized, in accordance with Lenin's prescription, as it had been in Russia in 1917. A third difference was the speed with which the policy was reversed: in Russia it took some twenty years of trial and hesitations before the policy of collectivizing agriculture was brought to a head, whereas in the eastern countries the decisive turn came only three to four years after the peasants had been endowed with land.

The immediate purpose of these gifts of land was clearly to

neutralize the peasantry.[64] It is very likely that after the destruction of so much equipment and livestock, the quickest way to get cultivation going again was to put the land in the hands of the frugal and hard-working peasants. But at least in some instances this could not have been so, as in the break-up of the Junker estates of eastern Germany, and in Hungary where even model farms were hastily broken up to allay the fears of the peasants.[65] In any case, the tactical aspect was evident in the way these measures were put through everywhere without any considered plan, or the possibility of proper distribution and registration. In Hungary and in Rumania they were carried through in about ten days, without the benefit of a land register or surveying personnel; in Poland they were decreed already in September 1944 and in a few weeks were followed by instructions for "the acceleration of the land reform," and also the widening of its scope. In most places the division was carried out by local committees of peasants, though nominally subject to approval by district or national authorities. Altogether, the achievement of the two years which followed the War was no more than a feverish division of the land, with frequent changes in and additions to the original provisions of the reforms.[66]

These measures really completed the land reform of 1919. They had to go farther in countries like Poland and especially Hungary where relatively little had been done in the earlier period, but, taken as a whole, they were less important than the measures of 1919. They were, however, more extreme, both in what they took away, which included land even from medium owners and farmers, and that generally without compensation, and in what they gave, as they divided the land into units even smaller than those of 1919. Poor peasants and landless laborers were the chief recipients; nowhere was it possible to give land to all, let alone to give to each the size of holding contemplated in the texts of the reforms. The reforms could not, therefore, become the basis for the expansion of capitalist farming, as Marxist writer had still contemplated in the interwar period; especially as the new holdings could not be let, sold, mortgaged or subdivided without permission, a restriction which was tightened before very long. It seems clear, even after so short a passage of time, that all those measures had been only a complex of tactical moves, more transitory even than the N.E.P. in Soviet Russia, in preparation for a final ideological battle throughout the eastern half of Europe. The circumstantial evidence is interesting in itself. Despite unsettled conditions and their many sufferings and grievances, there was on the part of the peasants little attempt at forcible action; they

sometimes occupied estates whose owners had fled before the advancing armies, but they were in no revolutionary mood and nowhere resorted to the kind of mass action which swept over Russia with the collapse of the old regime in 1917.[67] On the Communist side it was not as in 1917 a matter of taking over a going peasant revolution; they initiated the action themselves, not only in the backward peasant countries but also in eastern Germany. There was a close similarity, moreover, in the essential traits of their agrarian policy throughout the region; indeed the reform decress for two such distant and different areas as Rumania and the Soviet zone of Germany were identical in almost every detail and in certain sections identical even in phraseology.[68]

From the point of view of Marxist theory the new reforms made no sense at all, but from the point of view of Leninist tactics they were remarkably significant. Their idea plainly derived from Lenin's analysis of class relations in a peasant society and from his prescription for neutralizing the peasants at a critical juncture in the proletarian revolution. No doubt at the time the reforms served that purpose, even if they could not give land to all the peasants, who in any case looked upon the land as being theirs by right; though it is also possible that by endowing with the land the rural poor, whom they always meant to enlist against the richer peasants, the Communists may have lost some potential allies in the village. The real significance of the reforms, therefore, lay not in the redistribution of land they effected—which was indeed merely in direct line with the many bourgeois land reforms in Russia and neighboring countries from the sixties onwards, after the emancipation of the peasants—but in the fact that they were the first move in a determined Communist campaign for the extermination of the peasant class throughout the eastern half of Europe. An indication of the direction in which this campaign was to be developed is found in a talk to Soviet farmers broadcast from Moscow on February 9, 1948. The speaker said that the new governments in the eastern countries realized that small peasant agriculture was economically unsound and that the example of the U.S.S.R. was speeding up the movement for setting up co-operative farms. "For the present these co-operatives unite only the most progressive peasant elements, but it may be confidently expected that they will help in future to rebuild agriculture on a Socialist basis."[69]

"The progress of Socialism," Varga had written at the end of 1947, "is not following the same course everywhere. The best and shortest cut to Socialism is the Soviet method. In the new democracies there is a different form of transition to So-

cialism. Here some of the means of production remain in private hands. But the means of large-scale production, of credit and transport are in the hands of the State which no longer represents the interests of the bourgeoisie, but the workers generally."[70] He was referring of course to the contrast between agriculture, which was still in the hands of the peasants, and industry, which was being nationalized. Stalin himself, it will be recalled, had, during the War and at the end of it, given it as his view that the peasant countries bordering on Soviet Russia were not ripe for the collectivization of agriculture; he is said to have advised the Polish Patriots' Committee, set up in Moscow towards the end of the War, against too hasty nationalization and to have warned them against rash collectivization.[71] The subject had to be avoided indeed if the new radical regimes were to include the peasant groups, which at the time was desired everywhere—except, for different reasons, in Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. In the autumn of 1945 the Polish Minister of Agriculture, Bertold, said that, no matter how inefficient, the peasants wanted their own way of farming, "and that is the way it will be."[72] Every new land-holder had been given a title-deed, and a decree of June that year had instructed the Minister "to safeguard the right of every owner to be full master of his land, his equipment, and of the harvest he collects." The Rumanian peasants, too, were assured that although they could not dispose of their new holdings, no obligation of any kind would attach to the way they used them. The Bulgarian law on co-operative farms of Febduary 1945, the first of its kind, allowed eventual members to retain the ownership of their land, and even to claim it back if they withdrew from the co-operative.[73] In Czechoslovakia that right of ownership was later actually guaranteed by the Communists in their new Constitution. The unanimity is striking, and the contrast with 1919 is instructive. In 1919 the Socialist groups victorious in Munich, Vienna and Budapest had proclaimed the Marxist agrarian program and so had quickly lost power; the new regimes controlled by the Communists after 1945 elaborately buried the program so as to retain power. It remained to be seen how long it would take them to feel themselves firmly enough established to attempt to link the two again together.

By 1948 this stage had apparently been reached. It came suddenly and brought the purpose behind it, as well as the motive force of Russian pressure, into the open. The change came much quicker than it had done in Russia, but the reasons for it were much the same. There was a need for increased food supplies and of labor for industrial development, and also of food for export to pay for industrial expansion; for political

reasons there was a need to change the numerical relation of urban to rural population. Thus on both economic and political grounds it was necessary to bring the countryside within the ambit of the new controlled economy.[74] One after another the eastern countries were adopting economic plans of a more or less ambitious nature, and peasant agriculture, which the land reforms had actually spread considerably, did not fit into them. The needs and aims of the Communist regimes all pointed in one direction—the liquidation of the independent peasantry, because it represented an economic obstacle and possibly political opposition to a planned economy on the Soviet model.

The point of this liquidation policy was sharpened as the division between East and West hardened after the introduction of the Marshall Plan with its promise of economic consolidation in the West. Russia must have felt the urgency of organizing a rival eastern bloc and therefore the need to tighten the influence she already exercised on the revolutionary transformation of that region. Early in the summer of 1948, Zhdanov's address to the Cominform gave the new line, in obedience to which the members passed the resolution that "in every respect" they "must be guided by Soviet experience."[75] It was obviously in accordance with the directives of the Cominform at this time and its fierce denunciation of Marshal Tito's policy in Yugoslavia that the drive against the peasants began. It may be noted that this corresponded to an established theoretical pattern. According to Marxist-Leninist theory, as generally interpreted by Communists, agrarian revolution in backward countries has to move through four phases. The first phase is the class conflict between peasants and landless laborers on the one hand, and land owners and capitalist farmers on the other; that leads to a common front between rural and urban workers in a revolutionary surge. The second phase coincides with the victorious political revolution and ends with the distribution of land to the small peasants and landless laborers, as a necessary concession to their "property-owner fanaticism."[76] The third phase is a period of transition, with rapid urban and industrial development and the small peasant property organized on a co-operative basis. Finally, when industry can provide the necessary technical equipment, the process enters upon the fourth and last phase: the independent peasant class is liquidated and agriculture is concentrated into large collective farms. The Cominform was apparently pressing for an acceleration of the third phase. It moved, in accordance with Leninist theory, along two lines: on the one hand growing pressure against the independent economy of the kulaks, and on the

other pressure upon, or inducements to, the smaller peasants to join the labor co-operatives.

The more substantial peasants had already been greatly circumscribed by the land reforms and the general economic policies of the new regimes,[77] but real pressure on them started after the Cominform declaration. The main effort of the eastern governments went into tightening up the regulations for deliveries, the obligations of the richer peasants being raised, while those of the poorer were eased. Sentences for false harvest returns increased; in Hungary illegal threshing was made punishable with death. The class war was carried to the village everywhere through local agrarian committees and Communist cells in local authorities. When in 1948 the United Workers' Party of Poland was inaugurated by the merging of Communist and Socialist groups, President Bierut said that one of its main tasks was to push forward the movement for collectivization, and to that end to separate the poor peasants from the kulaks through the "sharpening of the class struggle."[78]

The second line of attack was launched in most of the eastern countries more cautiously, and everywhere with obvious misgivings. The idea of co-operative farming had been put forward in a general way already at the time the land reforms were enacted at the end of the War. The term "collective" was carefully avoided, "labor co-operative" being generally used; and no point was stressed more regularly in the speeches and writings of Communist leaders at the time than that such co-operatives could only come about through the voluntary action of the peasants.[79] The most careful interpretation of this policy was given in 1947 by the Yugoslav Vice-Premier, Edward Kardelj, in an instructive article which at the time was accepted as sound in all the eastern countries.[80] Kardelj laid great stress on the point that organized agriculture could not follow simply as an automatic counterpart of the industrializing in which the eastern countries were then engaged. In western Europe the phase of industrial development had usually meant the ruin of the peasantry, and hence was accompanied by a drive for colonies. In eastern Europe, through Socialist planning, industrialization could and must be made to go hand in hand with the moderinzation of agriculture. But such moderinzation could not be carried out simply through the apparatus of a coercive bureaucracy; it needed the understanding and hard work of the peasants themselves. Co-operation was the obvious instrument for drawing the small and medium peasants into a planned and combined effort, above all through so-called "labor co-opera-

tives." The co-operative form, Kardelj explained, was to be favored precisely because it made possible progress towards Socialism along paths which the peasants can understand and accept.

The voluntary principle seems to have been respected generally in the first years after the War. There were few co-operative farms by the summer of 1948, and pressure was limited to propaganda and the provision of incentives.[81] But the Cominform's deunuciation released a very different type of pressure. An article in the Soviet Review *State and Law* enumerating the changes which had taken place since Zhdanov's speech, described them as "the laying of careful preparations for carrying out mass collectivization in all the countries" belonging to the Cominform.[82] The Cominform's denunciation of Tito, which was as we have seen the signal for the unequivocal prosecution of the policy of collectivization, threw the eastern regimes into great confusion. On the one hand there was a rush to conform with the new line, and on the other doubts and even opposition, even if this was not open, among many leaders who feared trouble in their own countries. Marshal Tito himself had retorted pointedly to the Cominform that Yugoslavia had learned enough from what had happened in Russia not to want to nationalize and collectivize the land for the present, as that would only confuse the peasants.[88] But the other governments were not prepared to take such an independent line. The Polish, Hungarian and Rumanian governments issued decrees speeding up the introduction of co-operative farming, the Rumanian document describing this as a "turning point." When at the opening session of the new Polish United Workers' Party President Bierut said that collectivization would be one of its main tasks, he added that the form which collectivization would take must be decided by the peasants themselves, and that there must be no compulsion.[84] In Hungary, the Economic Council denied that the Government had any intention of collectivizing, yet a week later the Hungarian Workers' Party, apparently anxious to move more quickly into line, issued a statement that it favored as a general principle the collectivization of agriculture. The statement proved a shock to the Smallholders' Party, which until then had given its blessing to nationalization in industry on the assumption that it would not reach also into agriculture.[85] The Polish Communist Party called for a plan for "socializing agriculture."

The general impression of these developments on the peasants can easily be surmised from the great pains taken by all the eastern governments to allay their fears. The Czechoslovak President, Gottwald, in a speech in November 1948, tried

to attract them with the promise of many privileges for co-operative farmers, and at the same time warned his Communist followers that collectivization could only be a long and voluntary process, and therefore that they must not antagonize the peasants and break their unity with the workers.[86] In Hungary, Rakosi had said in July of the same year that within a year or two agricultural methods would have to change,[87] but in the spring of 1949 he warned the Workers' Party that any abuse of power or infringement of the voluntary principle would turn the peasants against the whole policy. The Polish peasants were assured that the Cominform had only meant to criticize Tito for mismangement;[88] and in a carefully documented speech, M. Minc emphasized that in 1949 there would only be enough machines to collectivize one per cent of Poland's three million farms, and not much more during the two following years.[89] But after the first flurry the obstinate mood of the peasants, and perhaps pressure from the Cominform, began within the year to produce a sharper attitude; the Communists turned their attack also against those groups and institutions whom they assumed to be bolstering up peasant resistance. A manifesto of the Czech Communist Party in the summer of 1949 called for a fight against the Church, their "greatest enemy," at the same time declaring that the enemy was "centered in the peasantry, and unless we liquidate this opposition we shall not be able to liquidate resistance in the villages to the establishment of co-operatives and the completion of the Socialist program."[90] Undoubtedly in Hungary and in Poland also the attack on the Church was part of the battle against the peasants.[91] In Bulgaria, Kolarov, in a speech to the executive committee of the Communist Party, said that, with differences of degree, the peasant community was being adapted to the Soviet model; the decisive phase had begun, and the fate of the peasants was certain.[92]

The new phase was only at its beginning, and reports as to its progress were confused. The only point to be emphasized here is that from the summer of 1948 on, it was pressed ahead at a rate varying in each country with the strength of the Communist regime or its fears.[93] As M. Minc had implied, there was little correspondence between the new tempo expected by the Cominform and the changes in material conditions that had been achieved by that time in the eastern countries as regards the supply of tractors and machinery.[94] On the other hand there was a suggestive correpondence between the Cominform's attitude and what was going on in the new Baltic provinces of Soviet Russia. From the spring of 1948 onwards the drive against the kulaks was intensified and collectivization so

pushed that by the end of 1949, 50 per cent of agriculture in Lithuania and 86 per cent in Latvia were collectivized.[95] In the eastern countries, where the voluntary principle was anxiously being re-affirmed, the peasants were encouraged to join in co-operative farms by the offer of many favors and privileges, the counterpart of the burdens which were being laid at the same time on the kulaks. Not unnaturally, the poorer peasants, especially the new settlers, who often lacked equipment and means, provided most of the recruits to the first wave of co-operative organization;[96] so that one effect of the land reforms had been to increase that section of the peasantry which was likely to find advantage in joining a labor co-operative. M. Minc had admitted this rather frankly in the speech already referred to; speaking of the prospect of building up a modern collective agriculture, he said that "some of the more enlightened poor peasants favor such a change, but the vast majority of peasants have adopted an attitude of waiting."[97]

The sporadic progress of these co-operative experiments, depending on local initiative and conditions, resulted in a considerable variation of types as regards the degree to which property and work become communal, and the way produce and benefits were shared among the members. After 1948, besides speeding up the process, the authorities also tried to reduce the organization of labor co-operatives to three or four approved types.[98] But by the summer of 1950 the several eastern countries had not yet evolved any formal schemes or rules for the organization of collective farms. They were still, as a result of the history of their development and of the nominal right of any member to withdraw from them, "labor co-operatives" which represented but a half-way stage, a hybrid form of collectivized farming without collectivized ownership.[99] All had to be registered with the agricultural authorities, but for the rest they merely received general instructions as to crops and targets for the year. The authorities relied on the dependence of the co-operatives on the tractor stations and other official facilities to fit them into the general economic plan of the state.[100] The approach on the whole was still tentative and conciliatory, and in an effort to win the peasants for the new policy by persuasion, the principle of voluntary membership and in most cases of the retention of individual ownership was still kept in the forefront.

It would seem evident that such a system could not allow the co-operatives any really independent action, whether individually or as a group. Given the structure and policy of the eastern countries such organizations, like the trade unions, cannot remain autonomous units, but must become adjuncts of the gen-

eral economic plan, closely controlled by reliable officials and local Communist committees. The labor co-operatives are intended to serve a psychological as well as an economic end, to propagate new ways of thinking and living, and make the peasant masses conscious, as Kerdelj has said, of their part in the planned economy. Their obvious subordination to central control has been criticized even by some of the left-wing Peasant leaders who have co-operated with the new regimes, on the ground that it must harm the old and deeply rooted democratic foundations of the village.[101] On the other hand, some of the radical Communist writers have also been critical of the co-operative trend, considering it a dangerous compromise and agreeing with those Russian writers who have attacked the *kolkhoz* markets as continuing the "contradiction between town and country as is incompatible with the fully planned economy of the Communist state."

That is merely to repeat in a different context the old contention of Kautsky, that it is absurd to expect the peasants in the present state of society to pass of their own will straight from their habitual to communal forms of production. Signs are not lacking indeed that the final step in the Communist attack on the peasant economy is not far away. Whatever the doubts and criticisms on either side, there is no turning back for the new regimes. They have, it is true, repeatedly shown during the past few years perhaps an obvious reluctance to press collectivization too fast and too far. Even staunch Marxists in their midst have shrunk from the possible consequences.[102] None of the eastern countries could afford either economically or politically to do as Soviet Russia did, and exterminate for the sake of rapid collectivization masses of kulaks and risk, even for a short period, destruction and famine and political restlessness. But the consequence of the hesitation has been that, under whatever pressure, the Communist organization and the eastern governments have had to eject not a few of their leading members and also large numbers of local officials,[103] while the drive for collectivization has passed increasingly into the hands of the more unhesitating members of their politburos.[104] M. Minc has tried to bridge the gap between the two pressures in an article published at the end of 1949 in *Pravda,* in which he declared that the agrarian transformation of a people's democracy must pass through two preparatory stages before it can reach the final stage of collectivization. Eastern Europe, he contended, was now passing through the second stage, comparable to that of the N.E.P. in Soviet Russia under Lenin. But the third stage was definitely to come, when no kulaks would be left and all farming would be collectivized.[105]

Chapter 15

The Dictatorship of the Proletariat

THE ATTACK on the peasants produced, as it had in Soviet Russia, as much bitterness as confusion in argument. Theory no longer seems to matter very much when as now in eastern Europe the actions of the Communist hierarchy have become almost unquestioned and unchecked; yet the Marxists could not bring themselves to give it up altogether. There was first the question of dialectical economic evolution, with the presumably inevitable capitalist phase. The point was disposed of by Emil Varga, in an article published by the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., in which he tried to explain the events that were taking place in "scientific" Marxist-Leninist terms.[106] Varga was writing particularly about changes in the colonial world, but his argument applied to all backward peasant countries, and it suggested, in accordance with Lenin's formula, that such backward peoples may skip the capitalist stage and pass straight from feudalism to Socialism. The ground for this view as it applied to peasant countries had indeed been prepared by Stalin some years earlier.[107] "Peasant economy," he had written, "is not a capitalist economy. It is a small goods economy, that is one at the crossroads to capitalism or Socialism. It can develop in the capitalist direction, as is now the case in capitalist countries, or towards Socialism, as is bound to happen in our country under the dictatorship of the proletariat." The essential condition for insuring that it moved in the right direction was proletarian control of a planned economy, of the "commanding heights." That, in essence, was the function of the new "people's democracies." They were set up throughout eastern Europe, with many common features, upon the structure of the movements of popular resistance; in the first place they represented a blend of agrarian Socialism, state capitalism and free enterprise under strong political direction, but as time went on they came increasingly under the ideological and political influence of the Communist groups within them. A somewhat intricate description of what they meant was given in the long and frank speech which Dimitrov read before a mass gathering of Bulgarian Communist delegates, at the end of 1948.[108] A "people's democracy," he then explained, meant a transition stage from capitalism to Socialism during which a

relentless struggle must be waged by the elements of the second against the remnants of the first. It therefore meant in effect, and in the second place, a dictatorship of the proletariat, so as to crush any attempts at reviving capitalism. It was, further, a form of transition to Socialism, one which could do without a soviet system, "provided that it is based on Soviet support," and therefore was only possible in full co-operation with the Soviet Union. Dimitrov had added at the time, a large part of his speech being devoted to the agrarian problem, that nationalization of the land was not an important issue, as co-operative farming would take care of that; while standing squarely on the Cominform line, but in peasant matters his attitude was still one of cautiousness. But in political temper a change came rather suddenly over the eastern peoples' democracies about that time; it was given typical expression in May 1949, in a frank article by the chief theoretician of the Hungarian Communists, Joseph Révai.[109] Applying in a way the remarkable admission of Dimitrov as to the dependence on the Soviet Union" M. Révai acknowledged that the Communists "had been able to avoid civil war because they were able to rely on the Soviet Union" and on the presence of the Red Army. He then went on to explain that a proletarian dictatorship, according to the teachings of Lenin and Stalin, means that power cannot be shared by the workers with the peasants or any other class. The peasants, he said, need not be denied a voice in directing their own fate, but the idea that they had any share of power must be put an end to; all the more so, as even the working peasantry was vacillating in the matter of Socialist development —"they vacillate, half supporting private property, half co-operative." And M. Révai ended by saying plainly that "a dictatorship means . . . the employment of force in suppressing our enemies. We shall apply force to build up Socialism and to suppress hostile class elements in an even more determined and firm manner than before."

The issue had apparently reached in the other peasant countries the point raised and answered by Lenin many years earlier: when the revolution is won, what becomes of the alliance of workers and peasants?[110] It was answered now quite unambiguously, to give one instance, by the Hungarian leader, Rakosi, who on March 5, 1949, announced that from then on their People's Democracy was to be a dictatorship of the proletariat, without the Soviet form. The Cominform attack on Tito had obviously been the signal for the preparation of a final assault on the peasantry, the ideological and political antagonist of almost a century. At the end of the War the Communists in the Danubian region had had to make up their minds what to

do with the peasants; the character of the new governments and the land reforms offer evidence that they had decided to appease the peasants until they could secure for themselves political and economic control. The supremacy of the proletariat had never been mentioned openly in the first years, nor had the idea of controlled planning been put to the fore. But whether purposely or not, the first phase of Communist agrarian policy had created conditions which inevitably prepared the ground for a collectivized agriculture; and equally inevitably the momentum of the policy had to lead to the suppression of all autonomous peasant organizations. Dimitrov had said on an earlier occasion that the labor co-operatives were in the economic field the counterpart of the people's democracies in the political field;[111] the presumption is that full collectivization would be the counterpart of full proletarian dictatorship, each serving the other's ends. It was merely a question of when and how. At first all the eastern governments, except that of Czechoslovakia, included agrarian as well as Socialist groups and parties. That was indeed one of the few differences between the new eastern regimes and the Bolshevik regime of 1917, that the separate political organization of the peasants was still assumed to be desirable or necessary during the period of transition; no doubt for the same reasons which caused agrarian policy to be kept still within co-operative rather than collective forms. The Danubian Communist leaders, being more concerned with tactics, had always maintained, unlike the Socialists, that the proletariat could gain power only in alliance with the peasantry. By the time the Communists had a chance to act, the peasants in the eastern countries had had the experience of parties and organizations of their own, led by people whom they knew and trusted, and had moreover developed a solid peasant ideology. On the other hand conditions at the end of the War had unexpectedly opened the way for a complete social reorganization in the eastern countries, and with such a prospect a real partnership between Communists and Peasants would have been an anomaly. The two groups could have met each other on practical matters, but not on fundamentals. As the Communists had Soviet Russia behind them they were able to keep most of the old Peasant groups and leaders out of power. They accepted the left wing Peasant groups in the People's Democracies, but only as adjuncts, for these groups too were eliminated before long. As their next step, however, the Communists themselves set up a number of peasant groups bound to the Communist organization, but still adorned with peasant labels and character.

The old Peasant leaders were inevitably hostile to Commu-

nism and from them might have come the only effective opposition. They were accepted only in Poland, where M. Mikolajczyk was well-nigh imposed by the western allies, and in Hungary, where the Smallholders' Party received the largest number of votes in the elections of 1945. After taking an active part in the country's reconstruction the Polish Peasant Party found itself subjected to increasing interference and in the end M. Mikolajczyk had once more to flee abroad. The Hungarian Smallholders' Party, having become the receptacle for many middle-class elements and interests, campaigned in the elections of 1947 with demands for a liberal economy, but it had subscribed in advance to a coalition program based on a planned economy.[112] The more radical National Peasant Party, founded in 1939 through the action of the "village explorers," and which more truly represented the small peasants and laborers, fared badly in the elections of 1945, though its members continued to participate in the government. M. Nagy, the leader of the Smallholders, had to flee the country in 1947; a little later, in September 1948, the leader of the National Peasant Party, Peter Veres, also had to give up his post as Minister of Defense and was replaced by a trusted official of the Communist Party who was also one of its delegates to the Cominform.

The more leftward peasant groups, which in the thirties had supported the idea of the Popular Front, met with a similar fate. In Yugoslavia Dragoljub Jovanovic and his group had joined Tito's partisans and later his government; but in the summer of 1946 he was expelled from both Parliament and University and a packed congress of the Party he had created was made to expel him also from its ranks. The Bulgarian "Pladne" group at first joined the government, but soon had differences with the Communists; under pressure from them, its leader, Dr. Dimitrov, was forced to resign in January 1945 and to leave the country; and his successor, Petkov, was also forced out and later executed. The Rumanian "Ploughmen's Front" entered the government in March 1945, its leader, Groza, becoming Prime Minister; by renouncing power he has been able to retain his position till now while his group has expanded into an agglomeration of many mixed elements, including some of the old Iron Guard, but policy is completely in Communist hands. But while all the old Peasant organizations have been paralyzed, and while the Socialists have been simply absorbed in so-called Workers' Parties, the Communists have for reasons of their own tried to maintain a semblance of separate peasant representation even when they had to create one. The Soviets themselves had done this in the eastern zone of Germany, where after organization of Western Germany as a

separate Republic they formed a Democratic Peasant Party to organize the peasants of their zone under Communist guidance.[113] In Poland delegates of the old peasant parties and groups were brought together in conference in November 1949 and, after being addressed by President Bierut and Marshal Rokossowsky, were merged into a new United Peasant Party. Its first declaration gave full support to the system of labor co-operatives and was frank in accepting the supremacy of the proletariat. The Polish People's Republic, it said, "is being forged under the leadership of the Polish United Workers' Party, with the active co-operation of the United Peasant Party. . . ."[114]

In spite of the persecution of the right-wing dictatorships the Peasant movement in central and eastern Europe had remained up to the War the most powerful force in the political life of that region. Even when its political activity subdued, the organization of the parties retained its influence with the rural masses, and in practical affairs, as in the co-operative movement in Poland, it was actually often gaining strength. The proof of its vitality and standing was seen in the important positions given to Peasant leaders in all the eastern governments in exile during the War.[115] Yet when the eastern countries were again free of the foreign invader and of their own former dictators, these parties were prevented from resuming their rightful position. The pressure against them began in Czechoslovakia, in the curious way already related, though she was the one eastern country in which the pre-war regime had retained its full standing and the Communists were not yet in a dominant position. Throughout the rest of eastern Europe the story has been lugubriously uniform. The Communists have simply continued the process of dissolution begun a generation earlier by the reaction. And that in spite of the fact that M. Mikolajczyk and M. Maniu and most of the other Peasant leaders had in very difficult times and conditions stood firmly for friendly relations with Soviet Russia.

Such a denouement had not been indicated by anything that had happened during the War years or in the days immediately after liberation. On the Peasant side the need for all parties to collaborate in the work of reconstruction was seemingly unquestioned, and for political reasons the Communists also had preached the need for joint action by workers and peasants. The pressure they quickly began to put upon the Peasant organizations must therefore have been related to their own new prospects. There was in truth nothing else that the Communists could do if they were to use their chance to force through the economic formula of Marxism. Normal evolution was not

working that way at all. The great economic crisis of the thirties had not produced the predicted social differentiation among the peasants; there was no bankruptcy among them, as in industry and trade and finance, where great gains were secured by a few from the shambles. Otherwise it would not have been necessary after the Second War for the Communists to bring into action all their means of propaganda and pressure so as to make the villagers conscious of the fact that they were divided into kulaks and paupers. Nor had the crisis and the achievement of Soviet Russia aroused among the peasants any interest in the idea of collectivized agriculture; otherwise it would not have been necessary for the new regimes to work so circuitously through the hybrid device of voluntary labor co-operatives, with its promise of unimpaired individual ownership—a device, incidentally, which came close to the idea of the Croat leader, Dr. Macek, who had at one time argued that "if you cannot change capitalist property into public property, you may at least change it into a property of work" through peasant ownership and co-operation. Nor, finally, in spite of the abuses of the old regimes and of their sufferings during the War had the peasants of eastern Europe, or even their left-wing groups, shown any inclination to join in a free-for-all revolution; otherwise it would not have been necessary for the Communists to move so discreetly in breaking their old ideas and allegiances.

Dr. Macek had admitted that "Communism can indeed see its worst enemy in the Peasant parties, since the latter's teachings are in all aspects diametrically opposed to Marx-Leninism."[116] From the peasant point of view the aftermath of the Second World War had speedily confirmed their old suspicion that Socialist-Communist policy would mean dictatorial control by urban minds of their work and life. That central ideological difference, whatever the issues behind it, has remained the core of the struggle which has been going on throughout eastern Europe since the end of the War. One may illustrate its depth and character by a particular episode of this period because it is one which occurred some months before the Cominform's attack on Tito and the shift towards collectivization. The leader of Hungary's National Peasant Party, Veres, a peasant, poet and writer and a national figure (who at one time was thought likely to become President of the Republic), published in the spring of 1948 a book in which he gave fresh and passionate expression to the Peasant ideology.[117] He championed in it the traditional self-sufficient peasant whose life he regarded as the "highest form of social existence," and whose rights and traditions he said should not be neglected even in a "people's democracy." He expressed anew his faith in a peas-

ant class and society, living and working side by side with the working class, each supporting the other, but neither influencing or displacing the other.[118] Veres was answered by one of his own subordinates in the Party, Dr. Francis Erdei, a trained Marxist and an expert on co-operatives, who argued that such a view of the peasantry, as a solid and lasting class, must inevitably unite politically all the peasants, rich and poor, in opposition to the working class; while Dr. Erdei saw in the latter the only historical force in a position to industrialize and modernize the country and so put an end to peasant poverty.

That, in a nutshell, was a simple restatement of the two opposing philosophies—Marxist materialism against Peasant idealism; the creed of the class war against the perpetual longing of the peasant for unity within the village. The Peasant leaders in exile have been trying to keep alive the ideal of their movement. They had proclaimed it afresh during the War in the joint statement and program issued in London. Most of its signatories, however, soon found themselves ostracized again at home, now by the new Communist regimes of their countries. As one after another more exiles were added to their number, they joined together to form an International Peasant Union, in their American refuge in Washington, based on the same general ideals as the London program of 1942.[119] But now these Peasant leaders are like heads without bodies. During the period of ostracism in the inter-war years they had been able to keep up their organizations and their activity. Now there seems nothing left, except perhaps the traditional weapon of the peasant, passive resistance.[120]

By a miscarriage of the dialectical idea, Communism met its political chances where Marxism had no social roots, and in the absence of propitious "objective conditions" has been forced to rely in a correspondingly greater degree upon power. In the eastern countries inevitably that meant power as against the peasant, not only against his political organizations but against his way of working, living and thinking. Everything "peasant" has to be rooted out if the "proletarian" way is to have a chance of taking root itself; and everything now being done in the economic and political fields in the eastern countries is aimed at that culmination. The elaborate Cominform attack on Tito was instructive in that sense. Many of its shafts clearly had no point at all: he was accused of having failed to nationalize the land, but none of the other eastern countries had or, except Bulgaria, have done so; he was accused of having been overrash in pressing forward with collectivization, at the same time as the other eastern countries were being urged to act in that very way. If one eliminates these dubious points,

there remains the one accusation that really mattered, that the Yugoslav leaders had "abandoned the Marxist-Leninist road" by neglecting to press the class war in the village; they had forsaken the "leading role of the working class" and had actually spoken of the peasants as "the strongest foundation of the Yugoslav State."[121]

The Yugoslav leaders had apparently said and done those things, but these things do not seem to have meant what they might seem to non-Marxist eyes. Striving hard against great odds to fashion a state after their own heart, the Yugoslav leaders may have realistically recognized the peasant as the strongest national instrument for that purpose; but that did not and could not imply the recognition of the peasant as an individual producer or as a class. For Marshal Tito had also stated, and that after the break with the Cominform, that capitalism on the land was already paralyzed and would soon disappear altogether; and he added significantly, but applying a less mechanical yardstick than the Soviets and the orthodox Leninists, that the test of being a kulak was not the size of a man's holding, but whether he was for Socialism or against it.[122] Therefore, whether they are within or outside the Cominform, whether they proceed ruthlessly or more cautiously, all eastern Communists stand for the elimination of the peasant; and the dictatorship of the proletariat is for them both a means and an end, both a dogma to which they want to conform and a tool which they do not hesitate to use.

Chapter 16

EPILOGUE

THE LONG conflict between Marxism and peasants is so full of meaning for the social history of Europe, and equally for the history of social ideas, that it is strange that students have so far neglected it. Inevitably the story has been described here only in outline; but one must hope that when the documentary material and the evidence of what actually happened become more readily available, this first attempt will encourage other students to examine and describe the story more fully. Its neglect by students, indeed, has merely reflected the general indifference shown by the western world toward the peasants as a social group and toward their political position, though they have always played a significant part in the turn of European affairs. At present that significance is self-evident, in Asia no

less than in Europe, now that a confluence of political and ideological circumstances has brought the peasants into the forefront of the struggle between East and West, between Communism and liberalism.

It would not be accurate, however, to attribute the post-war trend in eastern Europe, or indeed what has happened there since 1917, simply to the nature and the impact of Marxist doctrine. To get a more adjusted picture of the ideological conflict one must sift from it what is simply a Russian national interest, the Russian search for security. M. Révai and other Communist leaders have admitted that without Soviet support the "people's democracies" could not have come into being; they in their turn now serve as outposts to Soviet Russia. The arrangement must depend utterly, however, on the possibility of subduing the peasants, who have interests and inclinations of their own. The political regimes which provide a zone of physical security for Russia could not exist without dictatorial power; dictatorial power could not survive without the forced economic transformation which has to provide insurance against any possible recrudescence of peasant strength.

The creation of this security zone, with its "iron curtain," is merely hardening, in fact, what has always been a peculiar trait in the history of the Continent. There has always been a "curtain" somewhere between the Baltic and the Adriatic Seas: a strange zone, with something of political witchery in it, to judge from the many political and social movements which were checked when they reached it. The Romans tried to get round it from the south, but after much trouble gave up the attempt. The Turks at the height of their power reached the line, but could not cross it. The fiery stream of western Protestantism did not get beyond it, and the Eastern Church remained behind it. Nor in more recent times of economic development did the impetus of the industrial revolution pass the line. But the people who lived in eastern Europe were never of one mind: they have always been divided as between those who wanted to link up with the West and others who believed that the eastern half had a destiny of its own. Not only conservatives, like the old Russian Slavophils, but revolutionists, like the early *nardoniki,* believed that a social providence had preserved the *mir* in Russia so as to enable the East to escape the miseries of western industrialism and urbanism. The Marxists have since the eighties fought strongly against that view, and now Marxism has overrun the whole region; but the upshot is highly paradoxical. Whereas the Peasant parties, successors of the Populists, who since 1919 have propagated the idea of a *sui generis* peasant society in their region, wanted nothing bet-

ter than close relations with the western world, the eastern Communists, who want world-wide revolution and stand for an industrial development which would assimilate the East to the West, have now lowered an impenetrable curtain between them.[123]

That division into "two Europes" so closely reproduced in[124] the sequel of the Second World War, thus carries a point of some importance for the political side of our story. The social diversity of the two halves of Europe was naturally reflected in their political life, and the difference between the generally autocratic East and the generally democratic West received increasing notice as, from the latter part of the nineteenth century onwards, the western statesmen infused a more liberal content into international relations. Yet it was the same Liberal trend, concerned above all with political forms, which showed the least sense for the agrarian-peasant core of the social problem in the East, while the rising Socialist movement merely added a positive dislike of the peasants as such to an equal ignorance of the problem. When at the end of the First World War the structure of eastern Europe collapsed and had to be reconstructed in every aspect, the liberal peace-makers at Versailles simply ignored, in spite of the Russian revolution, the social implication of that collapse,[125] while the Socialists blunderingly tried to exploit it. One English Socialist at least later realized what had been overlooked: "To the Balkan peoples the indissoluble connection between national unity, individual liberty and peasant proprietorship seemed as self-evident as it did to Tom Paine; to western industrial workers it had no sort of significance; to the Communists it was an outworn ideology which must be ruthlessly crushed. Once again, as in 1848, the democratic revolution failed to reach completion, but this time the western democrats failed to show any concern over its failure."[126]

Yet in spite of all that happened between the two Wars, and of the rise of an impressive and progressive Peasant movement, Liberals and Socialists did not change their attitude during the Second World War. There was no evidence in western policy of any realization that in the eastern countries the movements of popular resistance expressed as much a social rebellion against their own former regimes, as a resistance to the foreign invader. Western interest and policy continued to center on political and strategic questions; it was not till the emergence of the Marshall Plan that any awareness of the social issue became apparent—a change which explains the bitter dislike of the Plan shown by Soviet Russia; and not till the collapse in China was there any evidence in western outlook of a dawning sense

of what was really the core of the situation in the peasant countries of Asia and equally of Europe.[127] It was an American labor leader this time who, at the inaugural meeting of the new Trade Union International, at the end of 1949, made confession of the earlier lack of understanding: "We should have known that the democratic fight in China was to be won, not on the battlefields but in the rice fields."[128]

The startling fact is that Communism has only come to power where by all Marxist tenets it might have been least expected that it could. In every instance, from 1917 in Russia to 1949 in China, Communism has ridden to victory on the back of disaffected peasantries; in no instance has it come near to victory in industrialized "proletarian" countries. So far it has always been a "proletarian" revolution without a proletariat; a matter of Communist management of peasant discontent. But while this shows that in the countries where this has happened the peasants were ripe for revolt, it does not show that they inclined to Communism. As regards eastern Europe at any rate the evidence is all the other way. It is not too much to say that the influence of the Russian Revolution might have reached farther if Soviet methods had not gone so far. Had the Russian revolutionary leaders shown themselves capable of restraining their Marxist *idée fixe* so as to link up with the peasants after the Revolution, as they had used them in the Revolution, together they could undoubtedly have brought democracy to eastern Europe for the first time; and the whole history of that region, and even of western Europe, might have been greatly and happily different in the subsequent two decades.

But Marxists have been taught to count the peasants as probable enemies rather than as possible allies; and so many Socialists schemes had broken themselves against the hostility of the countryside that, without troubling to look into the cause, Socialists have been apt to take that prescribed view for granted and write off the peasants as incurably reactionary. Yet the assumption that only Socialists had a revolutionary vision and the spirit to fulfil it, obviously ignores the facts of history. It is true that Marxist Socialism had provided the first popular revolutionary movement in the West, but it is overlooked that in eastern Europe there was a strong Populist, that is agrarian-peasant revolutionary movement before the new "scientific" Socialism came upon the scene. And even thereafter that new Socialism was never in the East anything but a revolutionary hothouse plant, an intellectual importation from the West, without native roots, clinging as a creeper to the strong growth of peasant radicalism. The artificiality of the Marxist connec-

tion is indeed curious: before 1917 eastern Marxism was only an intellectual appendix of the western body, now western Communism lives largely on the strength which flows to it from the East, from agrarian-peasant regions.

The natural repercussions of the Russian revolution, as might therefore have been expected, followed the local social configuration rather than the Marxian idea. Politically the effect was to release a vast Peasant movement, a "green rising" quite unique in social history; and on the economic side the effect was a vast increase in that class of small peasant proprietors which a hundred years earlier Marx had pronounced to be moribund. Moreover, what had come about after 1919 as an indirect effect of the Russian revolution, after 1945 was repeated as a direct effect of Soviet revolutionary policy, so that together the two changes produced an immense rural revolution. Not only the remnant of aristocratic feudal *latifundia,* but all capitalist farms throughout the eastern half of the Continent were in the process pulverized into an endless sea of peasant subsistence holdings.

Such a change was, of course, the very negation of Marxism. But it was such a natural change that the attempt to bring it round to the prescribed Marxist line required, as Stalin has admitted, a second and a more risky revolution. In other words, Communism first encouraged the peasants to help themselves to land, so that it might have its hands free to grasp political power, and then used that political power to deprive the peasants of land.[129] If the political means employed were dubious, the economic effects have not been less so; and economic transformation, after all, is the core of the Marxian system. The forcible application of its tenets to agriculture has left their validity at best an open question. All experience would seem to suggest that adaptation to particular conditions is the only possible approach to "scientific" production in the agrarian field.[130] Capitalist concentration has been insignificant, and in so far as it has occurred in farming it has nowhere been able to do without protection. Besides, even where it has been successful commercially it has been apt to prove costly nationally, because it exhausts the stored goodness of the soil; a defect which Marx had simply assumed to be inherent in small-scale production. Hence he had prescribed cultivation with "armies of laborers," but nothing achieved so far supports the idea that, as long as plants an animals have to be tended as living things, they can be brought into "mass production," or peasants turned effectively into "brigaded" laborers, as industry has turned handicraftsmen into factory hands.[131]

Apart from quantitative expectations, Marxist agrarian the-

ory has often claimed that it had also a social objective, and that through economic and social planning it could overcome the division between town and country which had caused the village to be left socially behind. As far as one can see, under Communist regimes the two have still remained separate economic and social entities. Each is still resentful if supplies from the other fall short, or if the cost in terms of its own effort seems to place it, as under capitalism, at a disadvantage. No doubt, central economic control gives the power to mitigate such disparity, but it also gives power to increase it; and so far it has been exercised consistently at the expense of agricultural producers wherever Communism aspires to build up rapidly an industrial empire. The element of compulsion and repression ever present in its policy does not suggest that the synthesis between town and country interests has gone very far under collectivization. At no point or place has it come about in the stream of a natural economic evolution, or by the conversion of the peasant farmers.

The forcible collectivization of agriculture does not necessarily mean that the agrarian theory of Marx and Engels was wrong; it certainly does not prove that it was right. Hence the only sense in which it is true that Russian collectivization has been a "second revolution" is in a political, not in an economic sense. The first revolution was directed against the old ruling groups, privileged by wealth and position; the second has been directed against the hardest working of all working sections, privileged by neither, but bound to the land to their life with an attachment which Socialists have never been able to understand. Therefore the only thing which the policy has proved so far is the determination of the small Communist ruling group to uproot an old and widespread way of life in the name of an insignificant proletariat and in the pursuit of an unproved theory. It is impossible to say what the peasants think of all this: the evidence is biased on either side. Peasant-like, they may wait to see how it works. Two points seem, however, self-evident. The process of collectivization, as part of an economy planned and controlled from urban centers, is at the same time binding the villagers together as they have never been before, on a professional and class basis. The second point is that there is nothing ultimate about a collectivized farm. A factory cannot be taken apart and its machines turned back into hand-tools. But a Socialist estate is as easily broken up as a "feudal" estate, and a "brigaded" farm laborer can as easily carry on as a peasant again.

The attempt to carry out the Marxist agrarian program in such unpropitious conditions was bound to depend on the use

of dictatorial means. That had not been part of the original prescription, in so far as it affected backward agrarian countries. In an industrialized country a "proletarian" revolution would automatically give its leaders control of the economic organization and a solid mass following. But even Lenin had always insisted as regards Russia—as Varga had done in 1919 with reference to the whole of Europe—that their most important task was the "conversion" of the peasants. Lenin did not think that such an agrarian change as they had in mind was possible or could be sound unless the mass of poor peasants and landless laborers were brought to the point of supporting it voluntarily. The voluntary principle is being anxiously emphasized at present in the eastern "people's democracies," but there it faces even greater odds than those which the Bolsheviks had to face in Russia. Communist agrarian policy has now to be pressed forward not by dispossessing "feudal" landlords, as in 1919, but with the use of land which for the most part had been the property of working peasants. It has to be done, moreover, after years of political change during which the peasants developed strong parties and an ideology of their own. And the small and poor eastern countries can build up the necessary industrial counterpart only slowly and laboriously, all the time making agriculture pay for it, and therefore must count with the resentment and passive resistance of the peasants.

Engels had laid it down that the first task of a Socialist revolution must be to secure the "commanding heights" of the economic structure. But in the eastern countries these heights are not to be found ready-made through capitalist concentration, and simply to be stormed by a revolutionary assault. In the peasant countries the Communist "commanding heights" have to be built from the bottom up, with the virtually conscripted labor of peasants and upon a plain peasant field; and dictatorial control can hardly be relaxed until that risky task is achieved. The political promise of Marxism, that it alone had the key to a classless united society of workers, seems relegated to an even more distant and uncertain future than its economic promise. It is not too much to say that Marxist theory and practice have dug a deeper gulf between town and country in peasant countries than any other social current before or after it. Nothing has cramped the Socialist ideal of the unity of all workers more than the Marxist creed of proletarian supremacy; and to no group or movement has the miscarriage of the Marxist agrarian doctrine been more fatal than to the Social-Democrats. They were continuously tripped up by it even before 1914; after 1919 by adhering to the Marxian formula and program they missed the chance of joining strength with the peasants and so

lost to the Fascist reaction; and by repeating that dogmatic performance after the Second World War they were submerged by the Communist sweep. In fact the Social-Democrats have been wiped out more thoroughly in the "people's democracies" than have the Peasants.

Nothing indeed is more illuminating for our theme than the helplessness of western Socialism in these agrarian matters. For decades on end the Socialist and Labour parties were seemingly spellbound by the Marxian formula, to the point of not even wishing to look into the realities of the agrarian problems. They never modified their program, as they did in other economic and social issues, in the light of their own studies and experience; they went on calling for the nationalization of land and agriculture in their texts, and abandoned the idea tacitly whenever they had to deal with the agrarian problem as a matter of practical policy. After missing, out of sheer dogmatism, repeated chances of building up a common front with the peasants, they all became "revisionists" when the opportunity for it had passed.[132] The Socialist view of the countryside and its ways has been so habitually hostile that probably few Socialists are at all conscious of the reasons for their failure, or contrite about it. If any other proof of their error were needed, apart from their own failure, it could be found in the change that came over the political life of eastern Europe after the First World War. Wherever in that region the social and political shackles which had held down the masses were loosened, there emerged spontaneously from among those illiterate and much-tried peoples, after centuries of foreign domination and native misgovernment, a remarkable Peasant movement. Its strength and progressive spirit showed as nothing else could what a wide and promising field had been neglected by Socialism because of the bias which Marxist ideology had instilled into it. It is true that, as a rule, the driving force for economic change had come from outside the agrarian sector: from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century mercantilism, from nineteenth-century capitalism, and now from Socialism and Communism. That also shows, however, that agriculture is not subject to a mechanical line of evolution as industry has proved to be. It is also true that in the past century of mass movements the peasants have proved difficult to enlist in their behalf. Their "conservatism" no doubt is due partly to the nature of their life and work, but also to a more independent outlook. The peasant world offers no example of continuous and unquestioning submission to some general abstract or "scientific" ideology, with merely some emotional slogan as a driving force, such as has become the characteristic of urban popular movements.

Marxism had always justified its scorn of the peasants on the ground, among other things, that they were brutish and could not be organized. Yet it is because they were organized, and were likely to become dominant, that their movement and parties were persecuted between the Wars by the reactionary dictators, and the Peasant parties have now been destroyed by the "scientific" dictators; for they were indeed so well organized that they could have barred the way to the pursuit of the Marxian agrarian policy. Between the two ideologies there were moreover other contradictions. Both claimed to be expressing a natural line of evolution, but the Peasants never claimed validity for theirs outside the agrarian field; for whereas the Marxists rested their theory essentially on economic assumptions, the Peasants rather emphasized a social ideal. Whenever the Peasant leaders of eastern Europe, or of Asia and Mexico and other parts, have spoken of their concern for the human side of work and life, they have been apt to be smiled away as visionaries, or scorned, as by the Marxists, as reactionaries, ignorant of the glorious truths of statistically proved achievement. Yet it is striking how often their views are now echoed in the growing uneasiness spreading over the West, not among die-hards but among social reformers and Socialists, about such matters as the problem of incentives, of waning skill, of over-urbanization, all of which seem ingrained in western industrial society and outlook. The Peasant leaders and movement had a bias of their own against that society. Possibly a historical judgment of the peasant's mistrust of the town may concede that it can be explained by the curious indifference shown towards his fate by the great popular movements of the past century or so —both by Liberalism, the movement of the new urban middle-class, and by Socialism, the movement of the new urban working-class. The nineteenth century has been essentially the century of an introverted urbanism.

The Peasant movement has also been derided for having failed to hold its own in the East. But its failure is not so striking as that of the old and powerful Socialist parties in the West, which crumbled before reaction. The point that really matters is that both groups had been crippled by one and the same factor, the product of the Marxist idea, which had divided the great mass of workers in town and country. Force and dogmatism have frequently had the advantage of immediate victory in battle, but rarely the benefit of ultimate fulfilment. The Soviet and other Communist regimes have displayed great mastery in gaining power in unexpected places, and in maintaining it against great odds. But the elaborate means of repression on which they have come to depend hardly suggest that Marx-

ism-Leninism has discovered the way to a new society. Of course, it is open to Marxists to maintain that Communism as now practiced is not really Marxism. Berdyaev, as we have seen, has argued that the Soviet revolution had in fact jettisoned the "scientific" element in Marxism. In a recent book a former leading member of the Comintern, Mr. Roy,[133] tries to explain this by saying that "Stalinism was Marxism in practice under conditions not foreseen by the prophets of Socialism." Lenin had conceded that "it would be easier to create a proletarian state in a country given to large-scale production,"[134] but could it be created in a country without any proletariat at all? Mr. Roy suggests that in such conditions the Russian Revolution was not and could not be a Marxist revolution. It had to depend on a "revolutionary alliance of workers and peasants" and to force through a policy of industrialization and Socialism in conditions which previous Marxist thinkers had never contemplated.[135]

Lenin almost admitted this, at least by implication; he never suggested, and no one else did while he was alive, that the Soviets had achieved Socialism in Russia, but always made a careful distinction between "war Communism" and genuine Socialism. The conclusion which these arguments would seem to suggest is that in so far as the Communist revolutions were meant to be Marxist, they have not been successful; and that in so far as they have been successful, they are not Marxist. Everywhere they have climbed to power on the backs not of the capitalist bourgeoisie, which did not exist or was insignificant, but on the backs of the working peasant masses, their allies in the political revolution. And thereafter the Communist regimes have had to work continuously not through economic leadership, but through political dictatorship.

In the light of the erstwhile Socialist ideal the upshot is certainly strange. It may be perfectly true that all this is not Marxism, that indeed, as Mr. Roy says, it is the negation of Marxism. But the arms for the ruthless pursuit of the peasants were provided by the erroneous theory and intolerant dogmatism of Marxism, by the fateful "scientific" pretensions of its political commands. And when purists, like Mr. Roy, now denounce Communist practice, it does not mean that they have relented; their criticism indeed merely re-affirms their own unmodified subservience to that Marxist theory. Try as he may, no student can therefore appear impartial in describing this Marxist story. He could prevent the picture from looking critical only by accepting the transmitted Marxist view of the peasant and his works; and then the picture would again appear in profile, only from the other side.

There is no way of making a social dogma, and a policy stubbornly based upon it, appear sensible, a dogma and a policy which the trend of economic life has drained of all logic. Marx's analysis of the evolution of agriculture has nowhere been proved right; his prescription for the organization of agricultural production has never come to be practiced as part of a normal economic evolution. The Marxists view of the political standing of the peasants has been made ridiculous by the dependence of the Communist advance on the peasants' revolutionary impetus and action; while its expectation of a natural alliance between proletariat and poor peasants, as a result of class division in the village, has, in spite of much Communist effort, nowhere come to pass.

The historical reality of the whole revolutionary episode since 1917 has been a vast peasant uprising over half of Europe and most of Asia, the final demolition of "feudal" conditions on the land. The Communist part in it was accidental and has remained artificial. Lenin's masterly political sense gave the Communists a chance to move in and supply the revolutionary drive and technique, but the power and substance of the current were agrarian, and Marxism did not contribute to that. Through the play of political circumstances the class which in the past had been moved only to sporadic revolts against local abuses and for local reform, found itself bound to a vicarious revolutionary ambition and to a hard ideology which had no meaning for the peasants, which indeed was alien and obnoxious to them. The most "earthy" social class and the most dogmatic revolutionary group were thus linked together in a partnership which, as Lenin had frankly foretold, was unnatural and could not last. Once the joint "bourgeois" revolution was successful, either the peasants had to be subdued and suppressed, or, as Lenin also foresaw, their revolutionary zest calming down, they would drop out of the revolutionary column, leaving its Communist head to go on again as a fervent but helpless Marxist group.

When in 1846 Marx invited Proudhon to participate in an organized correspondence between Communists in various countries, Proudhon answered that he was willing, but that he must make some reservations, because of certain passages in Marx's missive. He said: "Let us by all means collaborate in trying to discover the laws of society, the way in which these laws work out, the best method to go about investigating them; but for God's sake, after we have demolished all the dogmatisms *a priori*, let us not of all things attempt in our turn to instil another kind of dogma into the people. . . ."[136] In every instance, in fact, the Marxist agrarian idea has had to be ap-

plied by force and to rely on force for its survival, while the Socialists who wanted to remain democrats have in every instance had to abandon it. What remains then, in this field of Marxian scientific analysis and foresight? All that the student is left with is the old and oft-repeated story of all social dogmatism: an uncompromising doctrine, born of assumptions and prejudice, continually twisted at the call of expediency, and harshly driven forward only with the chance turn of political opportunity.

Notes

NOTES TO THE FOREWORD TO THE COLLIER BOOKS EDITION

1. See Foreword to the First Edition, pp. 21-22.

2. Harvard University Press, 1958. Among the material is a secret directive of 8 May, 1933, signed by Stalin and Molotov, calling for a halt to the "saturnalia" of arrests by all and sundry of peasants, poor as well as rich, as the documents make clear. It instructed those concerned to reduce the number of imprisoned men (apart from those in labor camps or sent to Siberian colonies) from 800,000 to 400,000! One might mention also the conversation with Stalin in August, 1942, recorded by Sir Winston Churchill, when the former is said to have admitted that some ten million kulaks were "liquidated" in the early years of collectivization. "Some of them were given land of their own to cultivate in the province of Tomsk or the province of Irkutsk or further North, but the great bulk were very unpopular and were wiped out by their laborers." (*The Second World War,* Vol. IV., 448.)

3. Harvard University Press, 1961.

4. Compare this with the argument of the Rumanian economist, Zeletin, quoted on pp. 78-79.

5. Moscow, 1952.

6. "Contre le dogmatisme bureaucratique dans notre politique agraire," *Questions actuelles du Socialisme,* Paris, Maijuin, 1953.

7. A summary of the articles was published in the *Manchester Guardian,* 9 January, 1959.

8. See Index under *Revisionism.*

9. See Foreword to the First Edition, p. 22.

10. There is some suggestive material in Baymirza Hayit's *Turkestan im XX Jahrhundert,* Darmstadt, 1956.

11. See S. B. Thomas, "Communist China's Agrarian Policy, 1954-1956 *Pacific Affairs* (New York), June, 1956.

12. The experiment has been too violent and the time since it began too short for anyone to judge how it may work out. But it is worth noting that already on 18 December, 1958, Peking radio broadcast a long resolution of the Central Committee clearly meant to bring some restraint into the action of local officials. The resolution urged that changes in property arrangements should only be made gradually; that "men and women, the aged and the young of each family" should be allowed to live together; and that in future eight hours' sleep should be guaranteed to all communal workers.

13 See Foreword to the First Edition, p. 22.

14. *New Statesman* (London), 10 January, 1959.

15. *New Statesman* (London), 22 March, 1958. One might note that the Austrian Socialists, who in former generations had been in the van of the Marxist struggle, and now stand on the borderline between Communist and democratic Europe, have in a new program adopted in 1958 promised to make secure the "property of work of peasants and artisans"; and it is both suggestive and ironical that the new program was drafted by Benedikt Kautsky, son of one of the intransigent Marxists of the nineteenth century.

16. See for instance G. S. Bhargava, "Positive aspects of Asian Socialism," *Pacific Affairs,* September, 1953; also Asoka Mehta, *Socialism and Peasantry,* Delhi, 1953. The centenary of Rabindranath Tagore which is being celebrated this year and the republication of many of his writings have added new strength to the Indian interest in the peasant and in rural values.

17. When writing the original study I had overlooked an interesting parallel from Japan, since described by Richard Storry in *The Double Patriots* (London, 1957). While Japan was in the grip of a feverish industrialization another line of thought, known as *nohon shugi* (agrarianism) stressed the importance of agriculture and rural life. Its chief exponent, Gondo Nariaki, writing in 1919 and later, showed himself utterly hostile to capitalism and to the centralized bureaucracy of the modern Japanese state; his ideal state was to be a confederation of self-governing village communities. It is interesting that this Japanese "agrarianism" was contemporary with the rise of the Peasant movement in Europe after the First World War; therefore it could not have been influenced by it but must have been inspired by similar conditions and problems. That is also seen in the close correspondence between its practical proposals and, for instance, those of the Croat Peasant Party.

NOTE TO THE FOREWORD TO THE FIRST EDITION

1. In H. Dalton and T. E. Gregory (editors), *London Essays in Economics in Honour of Edwin Cannan,* London, 1927; now out of print.

NOTES TO PART ONE

2. In his introduction to a new German edition of Marx's *Die Klaussenkampfe in Frankreich, 1848 bis 1850* (Berlin, 1895), Engels wrote that "Proudhon, the Socialist of the small farmer and petty tradesman, hated association most heartily," because it curtailed the worker's freedom.

3. The passage occurs in *Deutsche Ideologie* (1845-46, quoted in translation by Mr. Max Eastman in *Capital and Other Writings,* New York, 1933, p. 1). Marx said that as labor begins to be divided every man finds himself held fast in a def-

inite and circumscribed sphere of activity from which he cannot escape. "He is hunter, fisherman, shepherd or 'critical critic,' and must remain so if he does not want to lose his means of subsistence. But in the Communist society, where each man does not have a circumscribed sphere of activity but can train himself in any branch he chooses, society by regulating the common production makes it possible for me to do this to-day and that to-morrow, to hunt in the morning, to fish in the afternoon, to carry on cattle-breeding in the evening, also to criticize the food, without becoming either hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic."

4. Proudhon's book on property (*Qu'est-ce que la Propriété,* Oeuvres Complètes, Paris, 1873) was praised by Marx and Engels (in *Die Heilige Familie, oder Kritik der kritischen Kritik,* Frankfurt a./M., 1845) as making "a science of political economy possible for the first time." Meanwhile before the appearance of the Communist Manifesto, Proudhon had refused an invitation from Marx to collaborate with them, in terms which made only too plain his dislike of all centralized collectivist organization.

5. *Das Kapital* (4th German edition revised by Engels), Hamburg, 1890, etc., Vol. I, p. 714.

6. *The Communist Manifesto,* 1848. In *Das Kapital* Marx takes throughout as his vague prototype the *Parzellenbauer,* apparently meaning by this the small peasant-owner employing no paid labor and, moreover, dependent on some other source of income in addition to his farming.

7. Manifesto of the 1869 Meeting of the International, at Geneva.

8. *Das Kapital,* Vol. III, 2, p. 338.

9. J. G. Eccarius, *Eines Arbeiters Widerlegung der National-ökonomischen Lehren John Stuart Mills,* Zürich, 1868.

10. *Das Kapital,* Vol. III, 2, p. 340.

11. Among the North American States California had the greatest percentage of large estates: 2,531 estates of more than one thousand acres out of a total of 35,934, i.e., 7.04 per cent. Ranches of 20,000 to 60,000 acres, and even of 75,000 acres, were not rare in that period.

12. The material used by Marx dates roughly from the seventies. His agrarian theory is outlined in the first volume of *Das Kapital* (Ch. on Rent) and is expressly limited to capitalist farming. The detailed material given in the third volume of *Das Kapital* was still that collected in the seventies. In the Preface to the third volume there is a statement of Engels' that Marx intended to rewrite the part on rent, with Russia playing a part similar to that of Britain in the first volume, "because of the wide variety of forms of land-ownership as well as of the exploitation of agricultural producers prevailing in Russia." In the last years of his life Marx had set himself to learn Russian and Turkish so as to study agrarian conditions in those coun-

tries, from original sources, but he did not live to carry out the work.

13. His views were shared on this point by the German disciples of Henry George. M. Flurscheim, e.g., had no doubt that "the middle-sized and the small holdings, the dwarf farms and the small agricultural capital, are disappearing. Their place is taken by enormously large *latifundia.*" (*Der Einzige Rettungsweg,* Dresden, 1890).

14. Karl Kautsky, *Die Agrarfrage,* Stuttgart, 1899.—A. Nikonorov's article on *Lenin's Legacy on the Agrarian Question* (*Na Agrarnom Fronte,* Moscow, 1932/1, pp. 105-18) refers among other things to an article by Lenin on *The Capitalist Structure of Contemporary Farming,* which discussed agrarian conclusions drawn from the German census of 1907. Dr. David and others had used the data of this census to show the increasing importance of small-scale farming. Lenin drew the opposite conclusion from the census, on the following grounds: In a critique of the statistical methods and categories employed he breaks down and recombines the census data. For example, he defines small-scale farming as that in which the peasant relies neither on the hiring out of his own labor nor the hiring of others' labor, and shows this particular group to have declined in the 1907 census. Lenin's main contention is that statistics should show the class (i.e. socio-economic class, in the Marxist sense) of the farming unit, rather than mere area, etc. He illustrates this contention from Hungarian data to show how machinery and implements can be used to help define such classes, and proposes such indices as complexity of agricultural machines, area cultivated per machine, etc. Further, "Lenin . . . remarks that the question of the relationship between large and small-scale farming is a sectional question; the *general* question is *how* agriculture becomes capitalistic."—A great quantity of Lenin's notes on the agrarian statistics of various countries, including the U.S.A., were said by Nikonorov to be still unpublished.

15. Emile Vandervelde, *Le Socialisme et l'Agriculture,* Brussels, 1906.

16. Harry W. Laidler, *Socialism in Thought and Action,* New York, 1920.

17. The First World War and inflation in any case killed this argument by enabling the peasants to wipe out their debts.

18. G. J. Goschen had drawn attention to this trend already in *Essays and Addresses on Economic Questions* (London, 1905).—Writing in *The Journal of Economics* (Cambridge, Mass., November, 1924) H. T. Warshow mentioned that in U.S.A. the number of stockholders had risen from four to fourteen million between 1909 and 1923, shifting towards the lower middle and the working classes.

19. In an article dating from 1913 on *The Three Sources and Three Constituent Parts of Marxism* (translated and reproduced by Mr. Max Eastman in the work already quoted, p. xxiv; see

Selected Works, Moscow, 1934-39, Vol. XI, pp. 3-8): "In industry the victory of large-scale production is obvious at once, but in agriculture too we see the same phenomenon. The superiority of big capitalistic agriculture increases; there is a growing application of machines; the peasant economy falls into the noose of money capital, declines and collapses under the weight of a backward technique. In agriculture the decline of small-scale production takes special forms, but the decline itself is an indubitable fact." It is significant that Lenin should have reaffirmed this theory on the eve of the First World War and of the Soviet Revolution which raised the peasant issue more acutely than ever before.

20. By Marx in the first volume of *Das Kapital,* and later by Kautsky. Sombart has pointed out that the deduction was fallacious as it disregarded how much intensive effort had been transferred from agriculture proper to the industries which supplied it with machines, fertilizers, drains, transport, etc.

21. As late as 1920 the Kassel Congress of the German Social-Democratic Party had to pass a resolution declaring that "at present it is not possible to reach agreement on the economic importance of the various sizes of agricultural undertakings."

22. The elaborate work by Martin Germin on *L'Evolution Economique des Grandes Nations au* 18e *et* 19e *Siècles* (Paris, 1910) dealt with *Concentration* under (1) Industry, (2) Commerce, (3) Finance, but had nothing on concentration in agriculture.

23. Capitalist farmers were apt to be capitalists first and only afterwards farmers. Prof. Aereboe, the German expert, declared, e.g., that in Germany before the First World War one could find among the well-to-do peasants a larger proportion of graduates from the higher agricultural colleges than among the large owners and farmers.

24. Eduard Bernstein, *Die Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus und die Aufgaben der Sozial-Demokratie,* Stuttgart, 1899.

25. Eduard David, *Sozialismus und Landwirtschaft, Leipzig,* 1903.—The 19th volume of *Sbornik,* of formerly unpublished Lenin MSS, is devoted to *Materials on the Agrarian Question* from the late nineties and early nineteen-hundreds, and contains fourteen pages of notes on David's book. Lenin's notes really amount to a fierce critique of the Second International's agrarian theory and program. The topics on which David is attacked include the scale of agriculture, mechanization and electrification, elimination of the differences between town and country, and peasant co-operation.

26. Emile Vandervelde, *op. cit.,* p. 132.

27. Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (2nd German ed., 1852), p. 91.

28. *Das Kapital,* Vol. I, 2, p. 470.

29. *Ibid.,* Vol. III, 2, p. 348.

30. Cf. this with Fourier's "passionate series."—The unquestioning way in which the Maxian prescription was followed by Socialists at the time may be seen in the program of the English "Democratic Federation": in *Socialism Made Plain* (London, 1882) its able leader, H. Hyndman, called for the nationalization of the land and the "organisation of agricultural and industrial armies under State control" for purposes of production.

31. J. C. Eccarius, *op. cit.* The work is said to have been revised by Marx. It is interesting less for its contents than as a reflection of Socialist sentiment; for about ten years it was the most quoted Socialist authority on the subject.

32. Even some Conservative authorities on agrarian questions supported in Germany the idea of such guilds of production, to be set up on estates bought from indebted nobles, as more economical than their transformation into smallholdings, which involved the building of new houses, barns, stables, etc. (See Rudolf Meyer in *Die Neue Zeit,* 1892-93.) Among English non-Socialist writers John Stuart Mill was in favor of cultivation by co-operative associations.

33. Vandervelde himself told the story of a Socialist propagandist who went from Brussels to address a meeting in the country, and there eloquently protested against the duty on margarine, as "that raw material was indispensable for the making of butter."—When introducing the N.E.P. Lenin said that the Communists who at the beginning of the Revolution with the best intentions went about trying to organize collective farms, really knew nothing about agriculture.

34. *Leipziger Hochverratsprozess,* 1894, p. 196.

35. Eduard David, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10.

36. Resolutions of the Nantes Congress.

37. Significant criticism by the Italian Socialist, Gatti, himself a reformist but clearly no friend of casuistry.

38. Speech in the French Chamber, 1897.

39. Emile Vandervelde and Jules Destrée, *Le Socialisme en Belgique,* Paris, 1898.

40. An account of this controversy is given in the second edition (Leipzig, 1922) of Dr. David's book already quoted. Dr. David was one of the very rare Socialist experts on agrarian matters. A similar position was taken in France by A. C. A. Compère-Morel in *Le Socialisme Agraire,* Paris, 1920.—An outline of *Agrarian Socialism* is contained in Karl Diehl, *Uber Sozialismus, Kommunismus and Anarchismus,* Jena, 1922, pp. 56-76; See also N. Escarra, *Nationalisation du Sol et Socialisme* (thesis), Paris, 1904; Alexandre Klein, *Les Théories Agraires du Collectivisme* (thesis) Paris, 1906.

41. Vollmar, at Frankfurt, 1894.

42. See also P. A. Kropotkin's *Field, Factories and Workshops,* New York, 1913, and *The Conquest of Bread,* New York, 1926.

43. Article in *Die Neue Zeit* (a Socialist weekly, Stuttgart, 1885-1920).

44. Engels' last article in *Die Neue Zeit,* Vol. 1894-95, *Die Bauernfrage in Frankreich und Deutchland.*

45. In *Die Neue Zeit,* Vol. 1902-3.

46. Karl Kautsky, *op. cit.*

47. Emile Vandervelde and Jules Destrée, *op. cit.*

48. *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution* (in Russian, 1905), London, 1935.

49. Populism, as will be seen later, was a socialistic movement which aimed at building up in the eastern countries of Europe a progressive peasant society. *Narodnichestvo*—populism, from *narod*—people, *narodniki*—populists.

50. When Marx and Engels in their address to the Communist League of Germany (1850) complained because the first French Revolution had given the peasants land in free ownership, they attacked a principle of property which had then been applied all round, not as a special favor to the peasants alone. (See *infra,* note 88.)

51. Marx spent the latter part of his life in England where there were no peasants and no agrarian question to challenge his outlook. Under the influence of David Urquhart he apparently had some hopes that the Turkish peasantry might become a disruptive, democratizing force in the Near East (see Isaiah Berlin, *Karl Marx,* New York, 1948, p. 263). This does not suggest much understanding of the position of the peasants in that region at the time. In any case, it clearly meant no more than that they might be helpful in stirring up the revolutionary waters.

52. *Communist Manifesto.*—To Marx these stupid and narrow-minded churls had throughout history proved themselves "incapable of any revolutionary initiative"; though Engels, with little consistency, had warned the French proletariat that, to reach its goal, it "will have to crush a general peasant rising."

53. That division in economic structure and its general consequences was described by Francis Délaisi in *Les Deux Europes,* Paris, 1929.

54. See the section on *Rumania,* e.g., in *The Balkans,* Oxford, 1915, by David Mitrany and others.

55. Rudolf Schlesinger, *Marx: His Time and Ours,* London, 1950, p. 330 (quoting *Selected Works,* Vol. III, pp. 178-79).

56. See David Mitrany, *The Land and the Peasant in Rumania,* New Haven (Conn.), 1930, pp. 228-83.

57. C. Dobrogeanu-Gherea, *Neoiobăgia,* Bucarest, 1908.

58. *Ibid.,* p. 373.

59. *Ibid.,* p. 430.

60. *Ibid.,* p. 482.

61. The Russian usage, on the whole, is as follows: the Slavophils used *mir;* in the agrarian discussions at the beginning of this century *obschina* is used most frequently; in latter days the Communists used *krestyanskoye obshchestvo* (village com-

munity). Cf. C.P.S.U. Central Committee, *Short History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union,* Russian ed., Moscow, 1942, p. 82.

62. "The causes of agricultural poverty are partly explained . . . by institutions and practices which affect the processes of agriculture. The commune, known to many English but to fewer Russians as the *mir,* plays a large part among the latter. The institution was latent, or at least happily concealed from the eyes of administrators till the forties of the last century, when a German traveller, Baron Haxthausen, under the inspiration of Slavophil friends who yearned for something characteristically Slavonic, dragged it to light." (Sir John Maynard, *Russia in Flux,* London, 1940, p. 30; also abridged edition, New York, 1948, p. 23.) Haxthausen, so to speak, rediscovered the *mir* and drew attention to it as a possible means of preventing the proletarization of the masses. Such was the fascination it exercised that even western Liberals, though strongly anti-Socialist, demanded a kind of antiquarian protection for what was then still supposed to be a remnant of original communism. Leroy-Beaulieu, e.g., wrote in *L'Empire des Tsars et les Russes* (Paris, 1897-98), that "the heritage of the peasant commune charges Russia with an experiment" which must be handled with care. "Russia, so to speak, is responsible for it to civilization." And Cavour is reported to have said once to a Russian diplomat: "What will one day make you the masters of Europe is not your armed power, but your communal land system." (See Flurscheim, pp. 81-2.)—The economic and social value of the *mir,* let alone its origin, has been a matter of much arduous enquiry and discussion. Some writers argued that it was decadent and decaying. Others pointed out that it must have innate virtues as it had sprung up spontaneously again in the new Siberian settlements; in many places the peasants re-affirmed it also during the Russian Revolution. Again, some charged the *mir* with being responsible for the backwardness of Russian agriculture and the misery of the peasant (as, e.g., Chekhov in his *Letters*). Others pointed out that the agrarian problem was not limited to the regions in which the *mir* still predominated, and that it was above all the unfair conditions underwhich he had been emancipated which had broken the back of the peasant. The rights and wrongs of this dispute are immaterial to our argument. What mattered was that, as an ideal, the *mir* held almost universal sway over the minds of more than two generations. Its fate was passionately debated for decades and had a great influence on the formation of parties and their programs. It held the interest of the masses, and equally of economists and sociologists of all schools. Even when during the revolution of 1905 the *mir* proved rather shaky and Stolypin decided to do away with it, he encountered much opposition, in which prominent Liberals were as violent as the Social Revolutionaries. (See Max Weber, *Zur Lage der bürgerlichen Demokratie in Russland,* 1906.)

63. Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, *op. cit.*

64. *Das Kapital,* Vol. III, 2, p. 338.

65. The first Russian version of the Manifesto was by Bakunin (Geneva, 1869); a much more accurate translation was Plekhanov's (Geneva, 1882), to which Marx and Engels contributed a preface. Soviet historiography considers this the first serious Russian version. (An article on the subject appeared in *Bolshevik* [Moscow, fortnightly], No. 4, 1948, pp. 57-58.)

66. Thomas G. Masaryk, *Die philosophischen und soziologischen Grundlagen des Marximus,* Vienna, 1899. This view makes an interesting commentary on the early hopes and tactics of the Bolsheviks.

67. Written originally in French, the letter was published in Russian in *Arkhive T.B. Akselroda* (*Materialy po Istorii Russkovo Revolyutsionnovo Dvizhenia,* Moscow, Vol. II, 1924).

68. *The Communist Manifesto of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels,* with Introduction and Explanatory Notes by D. Ryazanoff (D. B. Goldendach,) London, 1930.

69. In the Preface to the Russian translation of *Evolution of Socialism from Utopia to Science,* by Friedrich Engels, 1884. Quoted by Martin Buber in *Paths in Utopia,* London, 1949, p. 94.

70. That was essentially true of the southern Slav *zadruga* and of its Russian counterpart, the *dvor.* The *zadruga* was a kinship association on a smaller scale than the village *mir,* but it was *definitely* a communistic association generally of a "large family," in the Chinese sense, of several generations living together. The land was held and tilled in common, and all property was kept together and distributed according to need by a "house father," who sometimes was a woman. In the Russian *obshchina* only the residual title to the land was held in common; the communist principle appeared again in the smaller unit, the *dvor,* a family community. When the *dvor* included several separate families, as it occasionally did, then it became a *zadruga.*

71. Karishev, e.g., saw in the *mir* the kernel of the "cooperative" agriculture of the future.

72. One must keep in mind that towards the end of the reign of Alexander II the number of peasants owning individual freeholds did not quite reach 57,000, which was only twice the number of noble landowners; in extent their possessions only amounted to 7 per cent of the arable surface. The *mir* was dominant. Chernyshevsky in his criticism of Mill tried to prove mathematically that after its disappearance three generations would suffice to proletarize the masses; in each village half the population would retain together only one-tenth of the soil. Naturally, therefore, those who agreed with that standpoint wanted to see the dissolution of the *mir* made more difficult. One of them even pleaded that the land held by the *miry* should

be declared untransferable to individuals, and thus remain a permanent endowment of the peasantry (see Leroy-Beaulieu). (Cf. the proposal made by Souhait to the Convention, in 1791, that all communal land should be made the perpetual patrimony of the poor peasants, and its arable part periodically be divided among them—N. I. Kareev, *Les Paysans et la Question Paysanne en France,* 1899.) Since his emancipation the *muzhik* was the kernel of all political thought. Western society was considered to be undermined by the existence of a proletariat, an attitude that was based on the views of Laurence Stein (1846). With Alexander III official policy came to regard capitalism as the enemy and the peasant as the stoutest bulwark against it; a policy which found expression in the Statute of December 14, 1893.

73. Small co-operatives of work for handicrafts, etc. (See Part II, Note 43.)

74. Nicolas-on (pen-name of Nicolas Danielson), *History of the Economic Development of Russia,* 1902.

75. At the trial of the murderers of Alexander II, in March, 1881, the chief figure among the accused, Zhelyabov, made of his defense a sketch of the revolutionary movement in Russia, and explained in summing up the history of the seventies how the crucial change took place in the minds of most Russian Socialists. He said: "Convinced that on account of the obstacles placed in our way by the government it was impossible to plant Socialist ideals into the minds of the people, the Socialists changed into Populists. Renouncing the pure doctrine we decided to act in the name of those interests which the people recognized. That is the characteristic feature of Populism. The metaphysical dreamers passed over to positivism by keeping close to the soil." Though still calling themselves socialists, the bulk of the revolutionaries were cutting adrift from the Marxist school.

76. See Alphons Thun, *History of the Russian Revolutionary Movement,* Moscow, 1905 (in Russian).—All these demands and others had been outlined already in the famous article published in Herzen's *Kolokol,* in 1861. "What Do the People Need," asked the heading, and the article summed it up as "land, freedom and education." Its detailed proposals laid great emphasis on the *mir* not only from the agrarian point of view, but as a unit of self-government, and gave a clear picture of the kind of Russia which Herzen and his followers had in mind—it was to be essentially a country of peasants, ruled by peasants for the peasants.

77. There is a curious and somewhat prophetic echo of that innate difference in outlook in an article on Russia's Historic Ideal written in 1876 by Mihail Eminescu, Rumania's foremost lyric poet. Commenting on Nikolai Danilevsky's scheme for a Slav federation (published in *Russia and Europe,* 1871), and though himself like all Rumanians attached to the Latin connection, Eminescu declared himself impressed by its grandeur.

Rumania, he remarked, seemed wedged between two worlds, and then he goes on: "The West we know to sufficiency. Its mission in the East is economic conquest, the proletarization of the eastern peoples by means of foreign industry, by enslavement to foreign capital. The other part of the world, on the contrary, we see moved not by an economic but by an historic and religious current. It cannot fail to exercise a great attraction upon the economically backward peoples of the Balkan Peninsula, who being yet unstained by modern materialism still hold dear religious faith and historic ideals." (*Collected Works,* Bucarest, 1914, p. 525.)

78. Mihajlo Abramović, *Thirty Years of Peasant Co-operation,* Belgrade, 1924 (in Serbian).

79. Another characteristic remark was the outburst of a modern Russian Populist, Pzheshechonow: "A natural process may lead to private property," he conceded, "but deliberately to bring about the proletarization that must follow it is a moral impossibility." (Weber, *op. cit.*)

80. Marx and Engels, or Kautsky, would not have thought much of this. But Liebknecht, arguing in the seventies for collective exploitation, regarded "the parish, the village, as a natural association." And when another German Socialist leader, Ledebour, urged that industry should be transferred on to the land, it was not merely for increasing manure, but for the idealistic reason of developing "fuller personalities" and avoiding one-sided training. This was, of course, a heretical deviation from Marxism, but it illustrates the affinity between the western "revisionists" and the eastern Populists. Most of the peasant programs in eastern Europe in the inter-war period demanded that industry should as far as possible be scattered across the land, mainly so as to provide the peasants with alternative employment in winter and other slack periods.

81. Even his most faithful disciples apparently expected Marx to say that the views of the first volume were not final. Vera Zasulich wrote to Engels in October 1894: "We are looking forward with growing impatience to the appearance of the second volume of *Das Kapital,* in which we shall probably find the observations of our great teacher on the economic evolution of Russia." (See article by Nikolayevski in the monthly *Die Gesellschaft,* Berlin, 1924.)

82. Apart from the village commons, which were to be found almost everywhere in the eastern peasant countries, there were in Rumania some villages, continually decreasing in number, in which the village as a whole had a prescriptive right to the land of its inhabitants; a villager could sell his holding only with the consent of the whole village, and if a family died out its land became the property of the village. See appendix on *Traditional Forms of Joint Land-holding* in David Mitrany, *The Land and the Peasant in Rumania;* also H. H. Stahl, *Sociologia Satului Devalmas Românesc,* Bucarest, 1946.

83. *Social Democracy or Populism,* a series of articles (in

Rumanian) in *Viata Românească*, Jassy, 1907, the organ of the Populist group.—The Rumanian equivalent of Populism was *poporanism* (*popor*—people).

84. Most of them knew, of course, only the crude imitation of western culture represented by their own towns, where ignorance and corruption paraded in western garb. Compared with this country-life was idyllic. It, too, was crude, but, as Herzen put it, this was the crudeness of the untaught child, while the other was the crudeness of the spent *bon viveur*. Kireyevsky even argued that to be "least civilized is to be least spoilt, and best fitted to bring about a general regeneration." The juxtaposition of the two types of life runs throughout Russian literature. Even when dealing with revolutionary activity, which was in the hands of intellectuals and other urban elements, the distinction seems to crop up in Dostoevsky's *The Possessed*, e.g., which gave a remarkable forecast of coming revolutionary methods, the only "sound" character in its assemblage of peculiar revolutionary types was a sober and sensible peasant, a liberated serf.—In Rumania writers and painters devoted themselves to depicting exclusively country-life, as if trying to escape at least in spirit from the artificial ways of the town; while the one exception, the playwright Caragiale, only concerned himself with the town in order to satirize its habits and morals.

85. Schulze-Gävernitz reports a conversation with "W.W." in which the Populist theoretician objected to State aid for buying land, "for that would benefit only the rich peasants. We want land to be given to all in equal parts." The ideal naturally links up with the similar sentiment entertained always and everywhere where land was the main source of living. Probably the first proposal for the equal division of the land was made by the peasant party during the revolt in Hellas, at the beginning of the sixth century, B.C. Several centuries later it was repeated by Phaleas of Chalcedon in his lost *Utopia*. About the same period Hippon of Syracuse advocated equal partition of the land, because "equality of possession is the beginning of all freedom"—the exact philosophy of the Populists. As a practical reform equal division of the land was first tried in Sparta.

86. Slavs were always farmers, Komyakov said, hence peace-loving, and thus able to acquire the true Christianity of love and humility. Teutons and Romans were conquerors; western Christianity, at least after the schism, had become the religion of conquest and subjection.

87. This had been advocated also by Bakunin, the land remaining, of course, if only formally, the property of the nation.

88. The passage occurs in *The Address of the Central Authority to the Communist League*, April 1850 (see Max Eastman, *op. cit.*, p. 364). The address forecasts that no alliance is possible between "bourgeois democrats" and the proletariat. As soon as the new bourgeois governments to some extent con-

solidated themselves they would take up the struggle against the workers. "The first point on which the bourgeois democrats will come into conflict with the workers will be the abolition of feudalism. Just as in the first French Revolution, the petty bourgeois will give the feudal landed estates to the peasants as free (i.e. freehold) property—that is, will try to leave the agricultural proletariat as it is, and create a petty bourgeois peasant class which will pass through the same cycle of impoverishment and indebtedness which to-day still holds the French peasant in its grip.—In the interest of the agricultural proletariat, as well as their own interest, the workers must oppose this plan. They must demand that the confiscated property remain public property and be converted into workers' settlements to be cultivated by the associated agricultural proletariat with all the advantages of large-scale agriculture. By this means the principle of common property will at once get a firm foundation in the midst of the shaky bourgeois property relations. Just as the democrats combine with the peasants, the workers must combine with the agricultural proletariat."

89. Stefan Zeletin, *Neoliberalismul,* Bucarest, 1927, p. 16. On the other hand Rumania's ablest social philosopher, Rădulescu-Motru, saw a chance of progress in what he looked upon as a "natural alliance" between peasants and enlightened Conservatives. *Țărănism* [Peasantism], Bucarest, 1924).

90. Nor indeed is there any indication that it changed his view on the character of the peasantry. This came out clearly in the several critical articles which Lenin wrote on Tolstoy and his work. He admired Tolstoy and thought that he reflected in an admirable way the ideas and moods of the Russian peasantry, but with "the historical peculiarity of the first Russian revolution (1905), in its strength and its weakness." Tolstoy, he said, protested against oppressive landlords and rulers, but his protest turned into a "denial of politics." He was but a "feudal socialist" who, therefore, like the peasants, could never lead a revolution.

91. Sidney Hook, *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx,* New York, 1933, pp. 53-55.

92. Born in Russia in 1855, Dobrogeanu-Gherea mixed with Populist and Socialist circles and joined in revolutionary activities. these being the occasion for his first coming to Rumania. He later settled there and quickly became the chief theorist of the Socialist movement, as well as a leading literary critic.

93. Lenin, *Selected Works,* Moscow, 1934-39, Vol. II, pp. 236-37.

94. *Ibid.,* Vol. II, p. 312.

95. *Ibid.,* Vol. II, pp. 318-19.

96. Lenin, *The Agrarian Question in Russia at the End of the Nineteenth Century* (*Selected Works,* Vol. I, pp. 208-9). This is the whole passage: "The abolition of private property in land does not by any means change the bourgeois founda-

tions of commercial and capitalist agriculture. There is no greater error than to think that nationalization of the land has anything in common with Socialism, or even with the equal right to the use of land. Socialism, as is well known, means the abolition of private commodity production. Nationalization, however, means converting the land into the property of the State, and such a conversion does not in the least affect private enterprise on the land. Whether the land is private property or whether it is in the 'possession' of the whole country, of the whole nation, makes no difference in so far as the economic system on the land is concerned, nor does it make any difference whatever to the (capitalist) economic system of the rich *muzhik* whether he buys land in perpetuity, rents land from the landlord or State, or whether he 'gathers up' allotment land abandoned by bankrupt peasants. As long as market exchange remains, it is ridiculous to talk of Socialism. . . . The economic significance of nationalization does by no means lie where it is very often looked for. It does not lie in the fight against bourgeois relationships (as Marx long ago pointed out, nationalization is one of the most consistent bourgeois measures), but in the fight against feudal relationships."

97. Lenin, *The Agrarian Program of Social-Democracy* (*Selected Works*, Vol. XII, p. 334): "Concerning the attitude which the workers' party should take towards the possible demand of the new farmers for the division of the land, a definite reply can be given. The proletariat can and must support the militant bourgeoisie when it is waging a genuinely revolutionary struggle against feudalism. But it is not the business of the proletariat to support the bourgeoisie when it is calming down. If it is certain that a victorious bourgeois revolution is impossible in Russia without the nationalization of the land, then it is still more certain that the subsequent turn to the division of the land is impossible without a certain amount of 'restoration,' without the peasantry (or, as it would be more true to say from the point of view of the presumed relationships: farmers) turning towards counter-revolution. The proletariat will defend revolutionary traditions against all such strivings and will not further the latter."

98. Dobrogeanu-Gherea, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

99. Professor Martin Buber has an interesting comment on this point: "From this we can see with the greatest clarity what it is that connects Marx with 'Utopian' Socialism: the will to supersede the political principle by the social principle, and what divided him from it: his opinion that this supersession can be effected by exclusively political means—hence by way of sheer suicide, so to speak, on the part of the political principle." (*op. cit.*, p. 83).

100. There was the historical evidence of the statistics of the Ministry of the Interior to show that alone during the reign of Nicholas I (1825-55) over 556 peasant risings had to be put down by force in various parts of Russia. There was also the

undeniable fact that on issues which concerned them the peasants were often more radical than the revolutionary parties, forcing them to amend their programs. (See Launcelot A. Owen, *The Russian Peasant Movement,* 1906-17, London, 1937; and Gregoire Alexinsky, *La Russie Révolutionnaire,* Paris, 1948.)

101. *Molodoye Narodnichestvo*—Young Populists.

102. A. Chajanov, *Die Lehre von der bäuerlichen Wirtschaft,* Berlin, 1923. This work summed up the results at which the *zemtsvo* workers had arrived in their activities before the First World War.

NOTES TO PART TWO

1. See *supra,* p. 31.

2. See *Introduction,* David Mitrany, *The Land and the Peasant in Rumania,* New Haven, 1930.

3. See also P.E.P., *The Economic Development of South-Eastern Europe,* London, 1945.

4. Stefan Zeletin, *Furt Juridic si Furt Economic* (Juridical Theft and Economic Theft), *Independenta Economică,* Bucarest, December, 1922.

5. Geroid Tanquary Robinson, *Rural Russia under the Old Régime, A History of the Landlord-Peasant World, and a Prologue to the Peasant Revolution of 1917,* New York, 1949. —The attitude of the several political groups towards the land after the Revolution was briefly as follows: *Cadets* (8th congress, May 12, 1917), after passionate discussion: Land for the working peasant. Excess of "working norm" (to be fixed by local committees) of private estates might be expropriated, against compensation. State domains to be divided up.—*Social Populists* (Moscow conference, March 23, 1917), Land only to those who work it themselves.—*Social Revolutionaries* (third congress), their old program. Land to the people, without indemnity, for "equalitarian enjoyment." Notwithstanding the harm done by the law of 1906 (Stolypin), which complicated the task, they demanded a number of measures that would strengthen the communal principle, open credits for the communes, development of communal labor and work in common. In short, "socialization of the land" and its equal division. This to be decreed by Constituent Assembly.—*Mensheviks.* Also waited for Assembly. Church and monastic lands (especially if excessive) to be confiscated, but to remain State property. Form of exploitation to be decided by local elected organs.—*Bolsheviks* (Congress April 28, 1917). (i) All land to be confiscated. (ii) To pass at once into hands of Peasant Soviets or other genuine democratic body. (iii) Nationalization of all land; right of enjoyment transferred to local democratic organizations. (iv) Ridiculed "petty bourgeois" vacillations of those who wanted to wait for the Assembly. (v) Peasants advised to take over land in organized fashion, taking care to increase pro-

duction. (viii) Actions of Peasant Committees who in certain parts were taking over the landlords' stock and machines to be supported. (ix) Advised rural proletarians and semi-proletarians to make every sufficiently large estate into a model exploitation, "to be run on behalf of all by the Soviets of labourers' deputies under the direction of agronomists and utilizing the best technical means."—An improvised *Peasant Congress* met at Odessa in the summer of 1917 and adopted in the main the proposals of the Social Revolutionary Party: (i) In Free Russia no cultivator should lack land, and none should have more than he needs; (ii) All the land, without exception, becomes the property of the People. (v) The land remains eternally the general possession of the People. Anyone may farm from this fund as much as he can cultivate. (vi) For this land they will not have to pay anything to anyone either in a lump sum or annually. (vii) All state and local taxes to be transformed into a single tax on income.—In March, 1919, the *Socialist International* in Moscow adopted "governing rules" which said, among other things: The dictatorship of the proletariat aims to centralize the forces of production and subject all production to a systematic plan. As a first step, it called for the socializing of agricultural estates and their conversion into co-operative undertakings. It particularly emphasized that small properties will in no way be expropriated and that property owners who are not exploiters of labor will not be forcibly dispossessed. This element will gradually be drawn into the Socialist organization "by example," by practical demonstration of the superiority of the new order, and by freeing small farmers and the petty town bourgeoisie from its capitalist bondage, from tax burdens, etc. "The task of the proletarian dictatorship in the economic field can only be fulfilled to the extent that the proletariat is enabled to create centralized organs of management and to institute workers' control."

6. Waldemar Gurian, *Der Bolshewismus,* Freiburg i/Br., 1931, p. 40. (A careful and informed account of the trend of the Bolshevik Revolution.)—Gurian gives the following two sources for his facts on the peasant action in 1917: Kostelnikov-Meller, *Krestyanskoye dvizheniye v* 1917 *godu,* Moscow, 1927, (of special interest is Yakovlev's introduction in which he describes the way in which the peasants dealt with the landowners); Dubrowsky, *Die Bauernbewegung, 1917,* Berlin, 1929.

7. Equally significant were the peasants' ways of dividing the land, which varied greatly with local circumstances. Where the *mir* had long ceased to exist the land was simply divided individually; elsewhere even smallholdings were pooled and the whole divided according to majority decisions of the commune. E.g. the Samara and other land committees, through a revulsion against the Stolypin system, declared that "farms and homesteads are economically undesirable because they are a violation of the forms of landholding." (Louis Levine, *The Agrarian Problem in Russia,* in *Manchester Guardian Recon-*

struction Supplement, No. 6, 1922.)—The land settlement of the previous decade was wiped out in many parts by the revival of the *mir*. The total extent of land seized by the communes in 1917-18 for redistribution was put at about 70 mill. dessiatins (189 mill. acres) from peasants and about 42 mill. dessiatins (114 mill. acres) from large owners. About 4.7 mill. peasant holdings, i.e., about 30.5 per cent of all peasant holdings, were pooled and divided up. The effect of the agrarian revolution, therefore, was in the first place to wipe out all large property, but also and no less to do away with the larger peasant property. In fact, as we have seen, more land was taken away and "pooled" from peasant owners than from large owners, and the levelling and equalizing trend became more marked after October, 1917, and was sanctioned by the law of January, 1918, under which all land was socialized. The peasants were inclined to act "legally" after decisions of village meetings, and they formed *volost* committees to deal with the land, though not obliged or instructed to do so. They held firmly to their belief that no solid rights could be gained by violence, and not a single instance has been recorded of the village saying or assuming that no formal act by the Assembly would be needed to confirm them in their new possessions. There were no outbursts of violence, as in 1905, in spite of the boundless demagogy of the electoral campaign, though partly no doubt because the landowners realized that all opposition was useless.

8. Nikolai Berdiaev, *The Origin of Russian Communism*, New York, 1937.

9. John Somerville, *Soviet Philosophy*, New York, 1946, pp. 39-40.

10. E. Varga, *Die Rolle der Bauernschaft im Verfallstadium des Kapitalismus*, Hamburg: *Kommunistische Internationale*, No. 20, 1921.—In *La Dictature du prolétariat* (pp. 129-30) Varga said that the communal farms tried in Soviet Russia with the village proletariat had proved of little use economically; politically it was necessary to introduce into the village the notion of the class war, "a very difficult task indeed," and one which was impracticable in countries where land was more evenly distributed than in Hungary. "We are faced here with a long and laborious task, but one to which we must give careful thought, if we do not want to see civil war between town and countryside become a chronic state of things." Varga seems to have been early in trouble because of such views, to judge from the two articles by V. Miliutin on *Comrade Varga's Revisionism in the Agrarian Problem* (*Na Agrarnom Fronte*, Moscow, Nos. 2 & 3, 1925).

11. Karl Kautsky, *Die Sozialisierung der Landwirtschaft*, Berlin, 1919.

12. Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (*Selected Works*, Vol. VII, p. 201).

13. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, p. 9.

14. *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, p. 191.
15. *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, p. 205.
16. *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, p. 200.
17. A Rumanian Socialist, Mihăileanu, put it in a more homely way when he warned that "we could stamp our foot when it was a matter of two or three thousand large owners but the several million new small owners have to be approached hat-in-hand."
18. Speech to the Central Executive of the Communist Party, March 8, 1921 (full text in *L'Europe Nouvelle*, Paris, 21 May, 1921).
19. Quoted by Manuilsky, in his speech at the VII Congress of the Communist International (*Abridged Stenographic Report of Proceedings*, Moscow, 1939, p. 25).
20. Inevitably what each peasant household received from the distribution of the large estates was very little, though this varied from place to place. For the 29 *gubernii* for which figures existed it appeared that by 1921 the average holding had risen merely from 1.87 to 2.26 dessiatins. In 25 *gubernii* (outside the Ukraine and Siberia) the number of landless peasants fell between 1917-19 from 11.5 to 6.6 per cent, the number of the smallest holdings of 2 dessiatins and under rose from 28.7 to 42.8 per cent, while holdings above 22 dessiatins disappeared altogether. Land pressure was aggravated in that period by a continuous exodus of semi-peasants in search of land and others driven out by hunger from the towns.—In *The Russian Peasant* (London, 1942, pp. 167-68) Sir John Maynard gives the following picture of the confused conditions between 1921 and 1927: ". . . with large numbers owning rights in land of which the alienation was not allowed by law, but lacking cattle, implements, and often even seed, to cultivate it, the practice became widely established, on the part of the more prosperous cultivators, of letting out live and dead stock on hire, or of undertaking cultivation on behalf of those who could not do it for themselves. . . . Sometimes the use of the plough and harrow was given 'without payment,' but this meant that the borrower must be prepared to do odd jobs at any time for the lender . . . the work generally had to be done when occupations in the field were heaviest, and the borrower might have to sacrifice part of his own crop to discharge his obligation." (Note: Material from *The Russian Peasant* is also included in the abridged American edition of *Russia in Flux*, New York, 1948.)
21. Cattle stocks in 1921 were less than two-thirds of 1913, sheep were only 55 per cent, pigs 40 per cent, horses 71 per cent.
22. In 1913, 42 million poods of mineral fertilizers were used, but in 1921 only 1.2 million were available; the needs of the State farms and experimental stations alone were estimated at 12 million poods.

23. The Commissariat for Agriculture gave the following figures for the area sown in Soviet Russia (in million dessiatins):

1913	84.4
1916	79.2
1920	62.3
1921	54.9
1922	49.2

This shows a decrease of nearly 42 per cent, mainly since 1917.

24. The total grain crops, including potatoes calculated in terms of grain were in million tons:

Average 1909-13	73.8
1920	34.4
1921	31.2
1922	49.2

(These figures are given in the articles by Mr. Louis Levine quoted before and by Prof. Max Sering in the *Manchester Guardian Reconstruction Supplement,* No. 14, April 1923.)

25. See Part One, Note 96.

26. Valuable documentary material on the earlier phases of agrarian policy is to be found in Dr. W. Kaplun-Kogan's *Russisches Wirtschaftsleben seit der Herrschaft der Bolsheviki, Leipzig,* 1919.—A general outline of Soviet agrarian policy is given by Alexander Bajkov in *Agricultural Development in the U.S.S.R.* (Bulletins on Soviet Economic Development, University of Birmingham, Dec. 1949).

27. See Part One, Note 97.

28. The passage continues: ". . . as a result we still have a dreadful scattering of strips, continuous divisions and re-divisions, and complete instability of land relationships. We must put an end to this if we wish to reconstruct our economy. . . . Such reconstruction can be achieved only if the peasant knows where his land is, if it is convenient and near, and if he knows that he can use it for a sufficiently long time, and so on." (Louis Levine, *op. cit.,* p. 377.)—Nothing could have been franker than Lenin's justification for the N.E.P. At the fourth congress of the Communist Party, in March, 1921, he said: "We must not try to hide something but rather say frankly, that the peasants are not satisfied with the social forms which have developed here; they will not have it, and it cannot therefore continue as it is. That is undeniable. The will of the peasantry has been made quite clear; it is the will of the enormous mass of the working population!" And again: "We know that only an understanding with the peasants can preserve the social revolution in Russia, so long as revolution has not broken out in other countries. . . . Our resources are limited, but we must satisfy the middle peasant."

29. Martin Buber, *op. cit.,* p. 108.

30. Before the First World War there had been 15 million peasant households, there were 26 million before the intensified

collectivization; by 1927 two-thirds of the cultivated land in European Russia, equal to 150 million acres, had been redistributed. (Sir John Maynard, *The Russian Peasant*, p. 163.)

31. Rudolf Schlesinger, *Marx: His Time and Ours*, p. 332.

32. Under the N.E.P. rural co-operatives were encouraged pending the formation of agricultural collectives, and by 1927 there were 80,000 of them. They did help to restore agriculture almost to its pre-war standard, but they were neither numerous nor strong enough to solve the problems of peasant agriculture, and they had the effect of strengthening still more the richer peasants.—Experiments were also made in large-scale farming by offering concessions to foreign capital (as also in mining, transport and industry). The experiment failed; the concessionaires had not enough mechanical equipment, and lacked knowledge of farming problems and of local conditions. (Arthur Ransome in *The Manchester Guardian*, March 19, 1928.)

33. Maynard, *The Russian Peasant*, p. 186.

34. *The Observer*, London, *Leninism without Lenin*, July 8, 1923.—As late as 1926, in a speech against malpractices and the neglect of industrial production, Stalin asked his followers to keep in close touch with the peasants and warned them against treating the village as "a kind of colony or object of exploitation by the industrial classes," as that would only undermine their whole Socialist structure.

35. *Theory of the Agrarian Question* (*Selected Works*, Vol. XII, p. 13).

36. I. V. Stalin, *Voprosy Leninizma*, 11th ed., Moscow, 1945, pp. 275 ff.—The Party policy began to stiffen again by the beginning of 1928, partly because the peasants were holding back grain which was needed for export, partly because of internal political tensions; though at the same time it was stoutly denied that the N.E.P. was being thrown over. Tax revenue was to be increased by one-fifth, which probably meant heavier taxes on the Kulaks, and commissars with almost dictatorial powers were appointed to see that the Government's agrarian program was carried out. Apart from the need for greater supplies, another and perhaps a crucial reason for the turn was disclosed in an article in *Pravda* (as quoted in *The Manchester Guardian*, March 2, 1928): "At the end of the civil war on the territory of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics there were about fifteen to sixteen million peasant households (economic agricultural units). There are now twenty-five million. Just a couple of figures. But he understands nothing who hopes that it will be possible to solve without most energetic mass work the tremendous problem of our agricultural production expressed in this and to deal with the threat to the cause of Socialism in the villages which lies hidden in these two figures."

37. John Somerville, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

38. Animal and mechanical power in agriculture:

	Animal	*Mechanical*
1928	98.45%	1.55%
1929	97.98	2.12
1930	92.44	7.56
1931	80.00	20.00

Mechanical power was expected to reach 30 per cent during 1932. (I. Altaisky, *Concerning the Elimination of Class Differences between Proletariat and Peasantry*) in *Na Agrarnom Fronte,* Moscow, 1932, No. 1, pp. 36-55).

39. "Measurement, expressing the contradictions between quantity and quality, is the law of the transition of quantitative changes into qualitative changes and of the reverse process, and is therefore the law of transition from one process to a qualitatively different process." (Leningrad Institute of Philosophy, *A Textbook of Marxist Philosophy.*—Abridged English Version, edited by John Lewis, London, n.d., pp. 350-51.)

40. Stalin, *op. cit.,* (7th ed.), 1931.

41. *A Textbook of Marxist Philosophy,* p. 350.

42. S. Zagorsky, *L'Evolution Actuelle du Bolchévisme Russe,* Paris, 1922.

43. Old Russia had kept up as no other country the old habit of small groups of people joining together for some co-operative work or undertaking, in village or in town. This was the nature of the *artel,* a peculiarly Russian institution. Kropotkin said many years ago that it constituted the proper substance of Russian peasant life. It was a loose, shifting association of fishermen and hunters, manual workers and traders and carters, peasants who went to the city to engage temporarily in handicrafts, as weavers or carpenters, etc.; and also of peasants who joined together for corn-growing or cattle-raising in the village. They were in a true sense associations with "limited" capital, as each partner retained control of his own property or tools, etc., in so far as they were not pooled for the common enterprise.

44. Kuznetzow, *Marx und Engels über die Rolle de Bauernschaft in der Revolution und ihre sozialistische Umgestaltung;* see also W. Kolarow, *Das Agrarprogramm der Kommunistischen Internationale, I, Die Kommunistische Internationale und die Bauernfrage,* pp. 1-12 (*Fragen des Agrarprogramms und der Agrarpolitik,* Moscow-Leningrad, 1935).

45. *The Manchester Guardian,* March 24, 1948.

46. I. Altaisky, *op. cit.,* p. 48.

47. "Every possible measure has been taken to make the peasants work. Village shops have been filled with textiles, hardware and crockery, so that even the laziest put in as many labor-days as possible. Equally important perhaps has been the dual process of industrialization and 'militarization' of agriculture, with a rapid development of team work, complete with a system of prizes, medals and honors, such as the title of 'Hero of Socialist Labour'—something like a knighthood in England. The Ukraine alone conferred last year 188 such 'knighthoods'

on agricultural workers, besides 4,287 other orders and medals. On April 24 a new decree was published, giving detailed tables dividing the country into several areas and laying down for each a yield per hectare in each particular crop and the minimum to which these targets would apply before this or that category of agricultural worker could receive this or that reward." (Alexander Werth, *The Mood of Russia To-day, II, The Manchester Guardian,* June 25, 1948).

48. Rudolf Schlesinger, *The Spirit of Post-War Russia,* London, 1947, p. 28.

49. In certain areas the share was eighty labor units, sixty in the wheat and one hundred in the cotton areas—a labor unit being nominally the equivalent of a day's work, but in fact, especially in skilled work, much less than an effective working day.

50. The peasant tendencies mentioned above seem to be still active. *Pravda* (April 23, 1948) published a joint statement from the Council of Commissars and the Central Committee of the Ukraine warning members of collectives to stop "private property tendencies," "anti-collective actions," and "destruction of socialized cattle."—On the other hand *Izvestia* (June 16, 1948) reported that in the Kostroma region (N.E. of Moscow), in spite of the Party's appeals, over 400 collectives "had livestock farms with only five cows apiece."

51. Whether farm workers achieved equality of income with industrial workers before the war is difficult to say. The Soviet authorities have ceased publishing statistics since 1935, and the absence of a cost-of-living index makes comparison uncertain. In particular it is difficult to say whether the village or the urban worker suffered more from the scarcity of consumer goods, and how the incidence of taxation weighed on the two groups. Sir John Maynard has suggested that the peasant paid (in kind) 15-18 per cent of his gross produce in direct taxes, besides the indirect taxes depending on the consumption of goods; and Sir John thought this moderate if seen as a tax or rent for land charged by the State (*The Russian Peasant,* p. 316). It is likely that fiscal policy varied according to the needs of the moment, favoring at one time the peasant and at another the industrial worker.

52. "Collective farms are allocated a certain minimum of deliveries due in the way of compensation for the services of the State-owned Machine Tractor Stations, and as a tax. *Kolkhoz*-deliveries exceeding that minimum (partly dependent on decisions in the field left to the *kolkhozes' autonomy*) and the output of small craftsmen and their co-operatives have to be calculated in a way similar to that applied in capitalist countries by government statisticians; and similar incentives are available to influence those 'autonomous' decisions in the direction desired. Excessive use of the influence of the Communist nuclei in the *kolkhozes* in opposition to the average members' interpretation of their interests would soon destroy that interest,

unless their suggestions could be backed by hints at premia, tax reliefs, etc., offered by the State. . . ." Rudolf Schlesinger, *Marx: His Time and Ours,* pp. 364-65.

53. Examples are given of the exercise of this relative freedom, both in its good and bad effects, in an article by L. Andrianov in *Sotsialisticheskoye Zemledeliye,* January 25, 1949, quoted in *Soviet Studies, Oxford,* January 1950, pp. 281-84. Numerous instances are cited of scamped *kolkhoz* meetings and "flagrant infringement of the *artel* rules," while the writer summarizes the effect when advantage is taken of the autonomy, as follows: "The success of every *kolkhoz* and the growth of its communal economy largely depend on the consolidation in it of the democratic principles of *artel* management. The inclusion of all the *artel* members in its management has a direct influence on the way in which they work. Practical experience of *kolkhoz* development shows that the more active the participation of the collective farmers in the management of the *artel's* affairs, the more concern they show for guarding and increasing its communal property."—There was inevitably a certain falling off in this trend during the war, through loss of machines, through the opportunities and temptations offered by the urban markets and so on. War conditions gave chances for revival of private farming, but this is unlikely to have been more than a passing phase.—Rudolf Schlesinger (*Marx: His Time and Ours,* pp. 407-8) says: "The present *kolkhozes,* whatever the limitations to which their autonomy is subject by the needs of planning, are probably the nearest approach to economic democracy existing anywhere; but it should not be forgotten that that autonomy is the reverse side both of far-going dependence on factors partly independent of human wills, and of failure to come up to such standards of equality as are otherwise recognized within the system. Perhaps *kolkhoz* democracy works well just because the commanding position of science in agriculture is not yet so undisputed as to prevent the average worker with good production experience from arguing an effective case even against the specialist. . . ."—The claim to "economic democracy" goes rather far for anything that is part of the tightly controlled Soviet system; one need only compare the collective farms with the self-governing village settlements of Palestine to see the difference in the meaning of the term.

54. An outline of the way the Soviets dealt with the co-operatives is given on pp. 119-24 of Prof. Martin Buber's book already quoted. A month before the October Revolution Lenin ordered amended "revolutionary-democratic" measures for the immediate compulsory unification of the whole nation into consumers' co-operatives; the following January a draft decree laid it down that "all citizens must belong to a local consumers' co-operative." In principle Lenin believed that the co-operative idea might be the means of building up a new economic order, provided that new forms were found to "correspond to the economic and political conditions of the proletarian dictator-

ship" and to "facilitate the transition." A year later he was attacking the co-operatives, still unchanged in form, as a "bulwark of counter-revolutionary opinion." Although in *Taxation in Kind* (Report delivered to the Tenth Congress of the C.P.S.U., March 15, 1921.—*Selected Works*, Vol. IX, pp. 107-22) he recognized the dangerous capitalist tendency inherent in the co-operative movement, Lenin insisted that it led to "a variant of State capitalism" and as such should be encouraged. The bad effects of excessive centralization led to a partial reversal of policy in connection with the N.E.P. A decree re-established various kinds of co-operatives, and two months later another cancelled the merging of all co-operatives in the *Zentrosoyus*. The system had become "bureaucratic, inelastic and stagnant."

In May 1923, in his essay on the co-operative system, Lenin reverted to his earlier estimate of "a social order of enlightened co-operatives with common ownership of the means of production, based on the class-victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoise." In the planned, all-embracing state co-operatives he saw the fulfilment of the dreams of the old co-operatives "begun with Robert Owen." This attempt to give a theoretical basis to the movement was interpreted by some as a turn towards Populism; but Lenin had in mind not only a unified but a uniform comprehensive system, stretching over the whole country and therefore necessarily under central control; differing in a measure from the State functionally, but coinciding with it materially. Stalin's explanation of Lenin's reversal of policy between 1921 and 1923 is that State capitalism had not gained the desired foothold, while the co-operatives with their ten million members were allying themselves closely with the socialized industries. Perhaps Lenin also saw in the co-operative idea a counter-balance to the sprawling and incompetent bureaucracy. The movement away from compulsion led by early 1928 to the restoration of voluntary membership all round, with the approval of the Board of the *Zentrosoyus*, though indirect compulsion was still at work by means of preferential supplies to the co-operatives and by discrimination in the granting of subsidies and loans to individuals. Ten years later growing State interference culminated in the abolition at one stroke of the urban co-operatives in 654 cities.

55. Rudolf Schlesinger, *The Spirit of Post-War Russia*, p. 17. —Mr. Walter Duranty in *Stalin & Co.*, London, 1949, actually judges this to have been "a greater revolution than 1917," and gives credit for it to Stalin.

56. Schlesinger, *The Spirit of Post-War Russia*, p. 171.

57. John Strachey, *The Theory and Practice of Socialism*, New York, 1936, pp. 407-8.

58. The general aspect of this point is discussed by John Plamenatz in *What Is Communism?* London, 1948.

59. A. Sennow, *Zur Frage des Gegensatzes zwischen Stadt und Land*, p. 99.

60. *Ibid.*, p. 96.

61. *The Manchester Guardian*, October 7, 1922.

62. Dialectical language about "the movement of matter" merely blurred in the following passage the simple admission that industrialization was a means of giving the "proletariat" predominant power: "The process of Socialist industrialization is a force of struggle with both internal and external class enemies. The Right-opportunists did not understand that. In their fear of the difficulties of the reconstruction period they proposed to suspend the class struggle, to reduce the pressure on the kulaks, to weaken the control over the middle peasantry, to slacken the tempo of industrialization. . . . It is impossible to stop the movement of matter. . . . Interrupting social movement in one form, we evoke it in another If the Party were to listen to Right-opportunists . . . and no longer to direct the peasantry, proletarian dictatorship would cease to be proletarian dictatorship and capitalism would be re-established." (*A Textbook of Marxist Philosophy*, p. 245.)

63. Technical issues sometimes appeared in this guise, as e.g. in the article by Vilde and others on *Beetroot Cultivation and Class Differentiation among Peasants* (*Na Agrarnom Fronte*, Nos. 5 & 6, 1925.)

64. After saying that any inequality between members of a collective now sprang from differences in ability, as among factory workers, not from status, Altaisky himself complained that some *kolkhozy* tried to preserve the old inequality by putting all the medium peasants together in field brigades which employed their former horses and implements, and all the poor and landless peasants similarly together with their former much poorer equipment. Moreover, the latter brigades also had to cultivate the poorest land of the *kolkhoz*. "Outliving the remnants of socio-economic inequality between the (former) landless laborer, poor and middle peasant" was not to be considered a problem on its own, but as part of the whole *kolkhoz* problem. What remained of those differences no longer bred capitalism (i.e. kulaks) and was under control in the *kolkhoz* framework where all types had equal rights and the differences were vanishing.

65. I. Altaisky, *op. cit.*

66. A striking contrast is provided by the stress that was later put on the education of the *kolkhoz* worker. Not only were the activities of the propagandists directed towards informing the workers on the *kolkhoz* on technical and political matters, with a sideline in culture ranging from the provision of newspapers and books to the showing of films and amateur displays during reaping time, but the State schools, set up in 1947 and now existing in 93 regions, provide instruction on experimental farms and a general curriculum covering "the elements of physics, chemistry and botany . . . some knowledge of general agriculture, plant cultivation, livestock breeding, mechanization of agriculture and the organization of *kolkhoz*

production. A great deal of time is devoted to the study of the Constitution of the U.S.S.R., the history of the C.P.S.U. and the nationalities of the U.S.S.R., and to a number of other subjects." (Editorials in *Sotsialisticheskoye Zemledeliye,* November 17, 1948 and July 13, 1949, quoted in *Soviet Studies,* January 1950, pp. 271-80.)

67. Rudolf Schlesinger, *The Spirit of Post-War Russia,* p. 33.

68. Characteristically, this found prompt expression in some parts of the province of Yaroslav, and perhaps elsewhere, in the peasants assuming that now they were free to break up the collectives and revert to private farming, which they proceeded to do. (*The Times,* London, July 19, 1937.)—It has even been suggested that this was at least one of the reasons why the Soviets had to let Hitler take the initiative, and with it the responsibility, for the 1941 attack, as the peasants could be depended upon to fight only if it was a clear issue of defending the new Russia.—On the political standing and influence of the several sections of the people, see also Julian Towster, *Political Power in the U.S.S.R., 1917-47,* New York, 1950.

NOTES TO PART THREE

1. Leroy-Beaulieu, *op. cit.,* Vol. I, p. 624.

2. Some writers would give this title to Poland, as regards the state of things at the end of the First World War. But in Hungary in 1937 Prince Paul Esterházy still had entailed estates of 80,000 hectares, Prince Festetićs of 30,000, and there were others like them, large parts being used for hunting. A description of their organization and of life on such estates is given by A. Málnási, *Magyar nemzet öszinte törtenete,* Budapest, 1937.

3. Soviet theory, bound to its idea and policy of class-division among the peasants, somehow convinced itself that this was bound to be the effect also of the neighboring land reforms. A private letter of June 20, 1927, from M. S. Timov, of the International Agrarian Institute, Moscow, to M. Ionescu-Sisesti, Director of the Rumanian Agronomic Institute, dogmatically expressed this view, though it went against all available evidence and the natural course of things. He wrote: "It seems to me that the agrarian reform must create an unimportant stratum of rich and well-to-do peasants, and contribute at the same time to the proletarization of the great mass of the rural population, thus facilitating the existence of the large agricultural undertakings. . . ." That process "will bring about before long a class differentiation in the village. . . ."

4. This apparently was an imitation with a different slant of the idea of Maria Theresa who had created a number of "frontier regiments," generously settled with land, as a first line of defense against Turkish aggression. Land and forest were given to those regiments for joint possession and use, and remained in their hand till the Rumanian land reforms broke them up.—Some of the other countries, as part of the reform, planted "re-

liable" nationals, though without any service obligation, as homesteaders in their frontier regions; Rumania did so in southern Dobrogea, Yugoslavia planted Serb peasants in Bachka, the Vojvodina and Macedonia, and Poland along her eastern frontier.

5. Some of the principal early discussions were reviewed in the writer's bibliographical article, *The Literature of Agrarian Reconstruction* (*Manchester Guardian Reconstruction Supplement*, No. 12, 1923). The detailed discussion of the Rumanian reform in David Mitrany, *The Land and the Peasant in Rumania* is applicable as regards general conditions, implications and effects also to the other eastern countries. Among other articles and books dealing with the reforms might be noted: I.L.O., *New Agrarian Legislation in Central Europe, International Labour Review, Geneva,* September 1922; *Agrarian Reform in Eastern Europe, International Review of Agricultural Economics,* Rome, January-March 1923; Pierre Jousse, *Les Tendances des Réformes Agraires dans l'Europe Centrale, l'Europe Orientale et l'Europe Méridionale* (1918-24), Paris, 1925; Arthur Wauters, *La Réforme Agraire en Europe,* Brussels, 1928; Willy Rumer, *Die Agrarreformen der Donau-Staaten,* Innsbruck, 1931.

6. Léon Duguit, *Le Droit Social, le Droit Individuel et les Transformations de l'Etat,* Paris, 1908, p. 83.

7. Danger of rousing obstruction all round if he touched the rural questions seems to have stayed the hand even of Carol I, the only one of the galaxy of foreign rulers imported into southeastern Europe to have proved himself able, conscientious and courageous in building up a new state. He frequently showed that he had the welfare of the people truly at heart (as did his wife, Queen Elizabeth, better known under her pen-name of "Carmen Sylva"), and gave proof also of his interest in agrarian matters, the crown domains becoming under his guidance the chief model estates in Rumania. On both grounds it is exceedingly strange that the four solid volumes in which an "Eyewitness," making use of the King's private correspondence and personal notes, minutely described the first fifteen years of his reign, never mentioned the everburning peasant question at all. —The "Eyewitness" was Dr. Schaeffer, formerly King Carol's tutor.

8. Nothing conclusive can be deduced from these variations, but it may be worth noting that Poland and Hungary were the two eastern countries which had an old native aristocracy, and where these groups had taken a leading part in the movement for national liberation during the nineteenth century. In Czechoslovakia the aristocratic landed class was almost wholly German and Magyar, as also in Croatia, the Vojvodina and Transylvania; while in Bessarabia it was Russian. The aristocracy of old Rumania, with very few exceptions, was of recent Greek origin, mostly the "Phanariote" families which had bought

themselves into governing positions during the period of Turkish domination.

9. The able study of Octave Festy, *L'Agriculture pendant la Révolution Française,* Paris, 1948, shows the decisive part played by agrarian problems in the trend of the Revolution and also how unformed was the agrarian policy of the revolutionary leaders (as it was to be in the Russian Revolution).

10. The point, in a somewhat different way, is made by Dr. R. Schlesinger in a review of Mr. Deutscher's study of *Stalin:* " 'The better part of Stalin's work,' writes Mr. Deutscher, 'is as certain to outlast Stalin himself as the better parts of the work of Cromwell and Napoleon have outlasted them.' (p. 570.) But Mr. Deutscher expects that, in order to save it for the future and to give it its full value, 'history may yet have to cleanse and reshape Stalin's work,' as it did before with the work of the English and French revolutions. The criticism of this conclusion is obvious: the English and French revolutions produced liberal bourgeois societies which needed centralized leadership only in their formative periods, while the Russian revolution has produced a planned and nationalized society which cannot exist without some kind of centralized leadership, though whether of exactly the present Soviet type is another question." R. Schlesinger—*Soviet Studies,* Vol. I, No. 3, January 1950, p. 251.

11. A. Mathiez, *Le Bolchévisme et le Jacobinisme,* Paris, 1920, p. 14.

12. See the instances mentioned in the articles by Dorothy Thompson and M. W. Fodor on *The Green Rising* (*The Nation,* New York, June 11 & 25 & July 2, 1921).

13. C. Ionescu-Sisesti, *Land Reform in Rumania* (*Manchester Guardian Reconstruction Supplement* No. 6, 1922).

14. See the Appendix on *Métayage in Rumanian Agriculture,* David Mitrany, *The Land and the Peasant in Rumania.* This meant too that besides having an excess of labor the peasant holdings had also a relative excess of equipment, that peasant farming suffered from being over-capitalized while the large estates were under-capitalized. In Yugoslavia in the thirties there was on an average one plough to two holdings and one cart to three holdings; half that number would have been sufficient for the whole area; the same was true of draft animals of which there was on an average one pair for every holding of 5 hectares or over.

15. S. Timov said in the letter to Ionescu-Sisesti, already quoted: "I agree with you that the agrarian reform has done no harm whatever and that, on the contrary, it has contributed to the progress of rural economy and even of national economy."

16. Density of population (per square kilometer of arable land):

Denmark	36.6
Hungary	80.6
Rumania	116.3
Bulgaria	119
Yugoslavia	157.4

To this must be added the difference in yield between the intensive farming of the West and the extensive farming of the East:

Wheat (quintals per hectare):

Denmark	22.9
Hungary	11.8
Rumania	9.1
Bulgaria	11.9
Yugoslavia	11

This would suggest that in Yugoslavia on a given unit of land four times as many people produced one-half the quantity of wheat produced in Denmark, but the comparison can only be relative, unless it were possible to take into account other crops and also personal and household goods which the self-sufficient eastern household produced for itself.

17. In Yugoslavia between the wars the rural population increased by 1,250,000 and the number of new holdings by 200,000; as a consequence, 5.5 million peasant families, or one-half of the total number had inadequate holdings.

18. In Yugoslavia, e.g., the average strip was half a hectare; the practical effect was seen in that average production increased by 20 per cent through the single change of putting strips together, when it was possible, in average lots of two hectares each. There was general agreement that such a consolidation of strips is for both material and social reasons a very difficult operation. Poland and Bulgaria achieved some results, though in Bulgaria it was carried out only in villages where a majority were for it. It was enacted repeatedly by governments who, apart from any economic reasons, wanted to encourage the growth of a strong peasantry as a stabilizing factor socially. Stolypin's reform of 1906 has been mentioned before: the German *Erbhofgesetz* of 1934 tried to build up a peasant upper class with holdings of up to 125 hectares; and King Carol also tried such a policy in the thirties, when radical movements were stirring up the poor peasants in Rumania. In Soviet Russia, in its early years, there was for years a struggle between those who wanted to consolidate the *mir* and those who for economic reasons wanted to consolidate individual holdings; in 1922 surveyors consolidated over 3 million acres of strips and not much less in the two following years. (The figure for 1913, it is interesting to note, was 4½ million acres.)

19. The figures were given in the paper prepared by Dr. Rudolf Bićanić for the British Association Conference on Co-operatives, in 1943. The budget of the Yugoslav Ministry of Agriculture amounted to $1.9 million or 0.87 per cent of the

total State expenditure; the provinces spent $1.3 million or 10 per cent of their budgets for rural needs.

20. See P.E.P., *Economic Development in South-Eastern Europe,* London, 1945.—The careful studies in this volume were worked out on the basis of elaborate statistical material by experts from all the eastern countries (except Russia) working as a private group. The papers had been circulated privately during the War to official bodies concerned with these problems before they were published together in this volume.—see also, Royal Institute of International Affairs, *Agrarian Problems from the Baltic to the Aegean: Discussion of a Peasant Programme,* London, 1943.

21. The perverse effect on rural and therefore on general economy could be seen in some figures relating to Yugoslavia, quoted by Dr. Bićanić. The cash income per head of agricultural population fell from $376 to $175 between 1926 and 1938. Prices of agricultural machinery, reckoned in kind, were about three times higher than for the same machines in central and western Europe. The peasant had to give two and a half times as much for a ton of fertilizer and so its use decreased after 1925 as "unprofitable." Taking 1914 as basis, the price index in the early thirties was 2,100 for industrial goods and 994 for agricultural products. As the peasants buy according to what they sell, their consumption of manufactured goods (especially clothing and boots, and also groceries and tobacco, etc.) actually fell in camparison with 1914.

22. Many simple essentials—tobacco, salt, matches, etc., were produced as State monopolies; the Yugoslav tobacco monopoly gave a net profit of 80 per cent while the peasant growers got 6 per cent of its gross revenue. These State monopolies were thus an effective form of indirect taxation weighing heavily on the masses.—Other governments living on the peasants' work found other arbitrary means to extract tribute from them. Fei Hsiao-Tung writing about conditions in China in an article on *Peasantry and Gentry,* said that under war conditions the real value of farm produce had increased, as the price of commodities did not rise so much and inflation had reduced the burden of taxes the peasants paid. But in 1942 the Government decided that peasant taxes had to be paid in grain, and later a law granted Government power to buy rice from the peasants at a fixed price, which was much lower than the market price. (*American Journal of Sociology,* July 1946.)

23. D. I. Creanga, *Veniturile si Averile României Mari* (Incomes and Fortunes in Greater Rumania) *Buletinul Institutului Economic Românesc,* Bucarest, January 1927.

24. *Monitorul Oficial,* Bucarest, January 16, 1923.

25. Virgil Madgearu (*Evolutia Economiei Românesti,* Bucarest, 1940, p. 358) making use of calculations of the agrarian economist Roman Cresin, stated that while small cultivators under 5 hectares had an excess of labor power, middle and large properties were in need of additional labor, evaluated at

190 million days a year. Of this 40 per cent was undertaken by paid laborers, while 60 per cent represented supplementary work performed by families of small peasant owners.

26. *Doctrina Tărănească* (The Peasantist Doctrine), in *Doctrinele Partidelor Politice*, Bucarest, 1923, p. 83—In a paper read in London during the war the Polish leader, M. Mikolajczyk, said that "the agrarians were prepared to make long sacrifices for the sake of industrializing their countries, but they are not prepared to agree to sacrifices for the benefit of capitalists and cartels who maintained high prices and also restricted production."—*The Peasant Program* worked out in London, in 1942, by representatives from seven eastern countries also denied in its preamble that there was any inherent hostility between rural and urban interests; they argued for a "combination of appropriate industries with agriculture."—The more radical Serb group of Dr. Dragoljub Jovanović granted that nationalization was reasonable for the main industries, and also for transport and even trade. But one would have to wait till concentration could be completed according to Socialist principles, and to the village the idea had no application at all.

27. This was put plainly in the program of the Polish People's Party, of December 1933: "With the object of attaching the people to the land, of adjusting the country's social structure and cultural level, and new industrial enterprises should as far as possible be transferred to rural centers."—For a discussion of this question see *Economic Development in South-Eastern Europe*, Ch. III.

28. See Leo Pasvolsky, *Economic Nationalism of the Danubian States*, New York, 1928; Frederick Hertz, *The Economic Problem of the Danubian States: A Study in Economic Nationalism*, Forest Hills, N. Y., 1948.

29. The point of changes in tenure in relation to changes in farming was noted repeatedly by older writers. E.g., H. Passy, in a study about a hundred years ago on the distribution of land property in France, said that changes showed that "the very nature of agricultural production, favored as it may be by local conditions, sometimes leads to an increase in the break-up of properties, sometimes on the contrary checks it and produces a tendency to concentration."—A. Golesco, in *L'Abolition du Servage* (1856, p. 65), mentioned that at the emancipation of the peasants in the Rhineland provinces it was proposed to fix by law *for each kind of farming* a minimum below which a holding might not be subdivided.

30. The most thorough investigation was by the so-called Temporary National Economic Committee in the United States, just before the war (*Final Report and Recommendations*, Washington, 1941). Its elaborate studies showed that in none of the mass industries were the biggest units the most efficient in productivity. In a practical way the depression of the thirties had also served to show that even in industry

smaller units could more readily adapt themselves to changing conditions and markets.

31. M. Mikolajczyk has given the following evidence for Poland. The number of animals (apart from improvement in quality) increased as follows between 1921 and 1929-39 (in millions):

Cattle	7.89	10.6
Pigs	4.8	7.7
Sheep	2.5	3.2

32. In the debate on the Rumanian land reform, in 1921 (*Parliamentary Reports*, p. 30) one of the Peasant leaders, Ion Mihalache, said: "We cannot look at the surplus in the balance of exports but take no account of the deficit it caused within the country. For if the surplus of several thousand wagon loads which large property gave for export was obtained at the price of ruining the health of the mass of peasant laborers, of their being kept in ignorance and poverty—then, Gentlemen, we prefer a thousand times the health and vigor of the people to the surplus wagons for export."—J. L. and Barbara Hammond have described in *The Village Labourer*, New York, 1912, how even in England after the inclosures the poorer villagers could get neither butter nor unskimmed milk for themselves, while many farmers fed surplus milk to their pigs.

33. Its calculations showed that in Rumania, with the sole exception of maize, production would have to rise all round by anything from 50 to 400 per cent to provide even a minimum standard diet for her population, without anything being left over for export.

34. See David Mitrany, *Large-Scale and Peasant Farming in Eastern Europe*, British Association Proceedings, Vol. II, No. 6, London, 1942.

35. Because of the cost of labor, of keeping up buildings and equipment, and because the English climate is so much better suited to mixed farming, many experts in England also hold that the future of English agriculture lies in mixed small-scale farming. "Several of my neighbours (all of whom I find most vitally interested in good farming and new ideas) cannot farm efficiently because they cannot get labour. . . . Any agrarian revolution would necessitate immense expenditure on layout and amenities. A comparatively small part of this expenditure would certainly improve the present system of farming a great deal. To my mind the future lies not with huge farms and scientific administrators, but quite definitely with improved amenities, some co-operation and the small family farm." (Letter from a Yorkshire farmer, *Times*, London, June 28, 1948, following on other correspondence on the subject.) —A conference on Family Farm Policy at the University of Chicago, in February 1946, attended by experts from many European and American countries, accepted the view that the family farm was the best form of agricultural organization and provides the farmer with the most satisfying life; it also agreed

that ownership was preferable to tenancy. (Proceedings published in U.S.A. by the University of Chicago Press and in Great Britain by the Cambridge University Press, 1948.) In America this idea has had more than economic significance: Jefferson identified family farming with democracy and favored a policy that would further the interests of the small owners. As soon as the Declaration of Independence was signed he returned to Virginia to initiate the abolition of entail and primogeniture; at the same time he proposed a law to apportion to every landless citizen of the State fifty acres "in full and absolute dominion," as a means towards equality of economic opportunity. (See Part One, footnote 87.)—In December 1949 the O.E.E.C. issued the report of a sub-committee which had been examining how the productivity of west European agriculture could be raised. It concluded that the greatest advance could be made by the improvement of grasslands. In north-western and central Europe there were fifteen million hectares of "bare and neglected grazing" (seven in the U.K., five in France, and about one each in Ireland, Switzerland and Austria); an average improvement in productivity of 40 per cent per hectare was possible. (*The Manchester Guardian,* December 3, 1949.)

36. From an article by the editor of the *Southern Cultivator* (Georgia) in the late eighteen-fifties, quoted in Carl Sandburg's *Abraham Lincoln, The Prairie Years,* II, p. 206. It complained that the raising of cotton and corn crops with no rest or variation for the land would soon exhaust it, and insisted that this was much more than a technical matter.—Just before the war a report of the Iowa Experimental Station stated that "the shorter the operator's time on the farm the higher the percentage of crop-land in corn tends to be, and consequently the higher the degree of erosion."—The Committee on Tenancy appointed by the late President Roosevelt reported late in 1936 that the proper use and conservation of the soil "require modification of our present system of land tenure"; commercial farming must be supplemented with subsistence farming. (This problem is of course everywhere the same. These illustrations are taken from the United States because modern large-scale farming has been most successfully developed commercially there, but soil erosion also has proved most widespread and disastrous.)

37. See Part I, Note 7.

38. London, December 14, 1946.—The daughter of a Jersey farmer with whom I was friendly sang the praises of her young husband on one of my visits: how good he was to her old mother, how nice he was to the children, how kind he was to the animals—and having run through the whole gamut of such virtues, she finally burst out in supreme praise: "And he manures his land as well as any man on the island!" To a townsman this must sound charmingly naive, but to her it was a vital test, the great devotion which for five hundred years had kept

her family in freedom and prosperity on the same piece of land.—In a more rhetorical way Gorki speaks of "cette terre qu'il aime d'un amour mystique; il a le sentiment et l'inébranlable conviction qu'il lui est étroitement lié par la chair, qu'elle est sa propriété consanguine, et qu'elle lui a été ravie par la force." (*Le Paysan Russe,* p. 143.)

39. Or at least as an alternative he should reap the reward of any labor and expense he puts as tenant into improving his holding, as in the famous Evesham Custom. In the Vale of Evesham the small tenant and producer acquired a right of ownership in fruit trees, asparagus, etc., he may have planted or which he had acquired from the former occupier. As a consequence, when leaving he had a right to nominate a new tenant without obstruction from the landlord if the new tenant had good credentials, and in that way could obtain compensation for his improvements. The custom offered a strong incentive to the small tenant to improve his holding and so was of evident benefit also to the landlord.—For whatever reasons, a ruling of the Ministry of Agriculture, in 1949, decreed the abolition of the old Evesham Custom.

40. Professor Hsiao-Tung says in the paper on the Chinese peasantry: "A more or less self-sufficient peasant family can stand aloof from the change in the value of money. Security is a matter of course. There seems to be no necessity for any militant organisation on a large scale."

41. The eastern counterpart of the European story is told by Erich H. Jacoby in *Agrarian Unrest in South-East Asia* (New York and Oxford, 1949). In all the countries of that region subsistence farming has given way to farming for export. The farm unit has grown ever larger, turning the small peasant in one way or another into a serf. Production has increased, but not the "level of living." All over south-east Asia the former and present small cultivators are restless and ready to grasp at any promise of change. The remedies, according to Mr. Jacoby, are, first, a return to mixed farming; then a reliable system of land tenure; thirdly and most important, capital outlay whether native or foreign must be used for the advancement of the peasant farmer.

42. Writing of earlier conditions in England and Brittany Mr. Noel F. Hall said: "In both cases it was found that the provision of cheap local transport facilities played a decisive part in stimulating local production and in relieving the more extreme forms of poverty." (*Measures of a National and International Character for Raising the Standard of Living,* League of Nations, 1938, p. 54.)

43. In the Introduction to G. Gatti's book, *Socialism and Agriculture,* Paris, 1901.

44. See Diarmid Coffey, *The Cooperative Movement in Jugoslavia, Rumania and North Italy During and After the World War,* New York, 1922.

45. The products of the Polish co-operatives were of suffi-

cient quality to enable their canned meat products to compete in the American market, while Bulgarian co-operatives were equally successful in the export of high-class fruit. Factories for the canning of fruit pulp were set up in Bulgaria and large-scale collective irrigation and power supply were undertaken through co-operative organizations. The Czechoslovak co-operative system was highly developed and that of Slovenia, under strong clerical influence, was remarkable for its comprehensive character. The Croat Peasant Party had set up two separate organizations: The *Gospodarska Sloga* (Economic Concord) and *Seljačka Sloga* (Peasant Concord). The first was concerned with material and economic matters; it organized collective labor to meet collective needs, like building a road in one place, an irrigation channel elsewhere, electrification at Karlovać and Kriz, or the rebuilding of the burnt-out village of Kolareć. Its efforts were successful in improving conditions in local markets, such as reducing the often exorbitant market fees charged by municipalities, having minimum prices fixed under supervision of an agent of the organization, and so on; it was also successful in raising the wages of peasants working in processing factories, and in levelling price discrepancies between various regions. Of a more public nature was its work to ease the transport of grain to districts which had been left short of supplies. In a short time the *Gospodarska Sloga* had 5,000 village branches, with 230,000 organized members. Its activities were directed either by a committee of the local branch or by the district or central executive; except where the need arose for a specific directing organ, when a special co-operative was founded, in connection, however, with the existing network of village co-operatives. The *Seljačka Sloga* was concerned with educational and cultural matters, often making up for the lack or the inadequacy of the public system: it organized schools and published textbooks, it helped to establish libraries and musical societies in the villages (the instruments of the village *tamburitza* band being owned co-operatively), and it was highly successful in dealing with adult illiteracy, not through professional teachers but by a kind of self-help system among the villagers themselves. The old Slav co-operative working group or *zadruga* still survived, though the units were smaller, comprising 4-10 members, as against the earlier units of 20-60 members. Co-operative law prevailed in these units, with the principle that only those who work the land have right of ownership over it, and that right was a communal one. Village commons, covering several million hectares of land, organized under a special law, still existed and provided a collective basis for cattle breeding. The communal principle was not restricted to pasture land, but was also used in shepherd, field-guard and other village functions; and many forests were also owned communally. Spontaneous co-operative growth took place through the pressing need for collaboration in supply, marketing and cattle insur-

ance, though these had no written statues or formal co-operative basis. Among co-operative activities not already mentioned were the following: organization of fairs, provision of weighing bridges, wholesale buying of necessities, cattle vaccination, orchard-cleansing, hiring of machines, food supply, provision of seeds, and contracts for raising industrial crops. (Bićanić, *op. cit.*)

46. For further details see Stojan Príbićević, *Living Space, The Story of Southeastern Europe,* London, 1940.

47. It is true that some of these activities were spurred on by political interest, like those of the Slovene Clerical Party and of the Croat Peasant Party. In eastern Galicia the Ukrainian Nationalists through the UNDO Party developed an efficient co-operative system to strengthen their peasant followers and retain their goodwill; it was also a means of retaining the land in Ukranian hands, just as in earlier years in Transylvania and elsewhere co-operatives had been set up for the purchase of estates that might come into the market.

48. In Croatia there was one attempt by the peasants to set up a *kolkhoz* of their own. The venture failed when it passed from the phase of cultivation by machines to that of intensive tillage by human labor. (Bićanić, *op. cit.*, p. 7.)

49. Bićanić, *op. cit.*

50. A. Chrjashtchew, *Die Evolutzion der Klassen innerhalb der Bauernschaft* (*Russische Korrespondenz,* Hamburg, January-March, 1922).

51. Ion Mihalache, *Noul Regim Agrar,* Bucarest, 1925, p. 27.—In the paper read in London in 1942 M. Mikolajczyk said that agricultural development needed action along three lines: (1) increase the area under peasant holdings and their size whenever land is available; (2) consolidate the peasant strips; (3) change from extensive cereal crops to mixed farming of richer crops and cattle rearing.

52. Valeriu Bulgariu, *Agrarian Policy in Rumania, The Banker,* London, March, 1939.

53. Quoted by Dr. Rudolf Bićanić in the paper already mentioned.

54. Introduction by G. K. Chesterton to *The Making of Rural Europe,* by Helen Douglas Irvine (London, 1922).

55. Dorothy Thompson and M. W. Fodor, *op. cit.*

56. Military expansion was favored by the imported dynasties perhaps partly because the officer class was the one element which these princes, in their uncertain position, could make directly dependent on and subservient to themselves.

57. Ion Mihalache, *Noul Regim Agrar,* Bucarest, 1925, p. 4.

58. In Rumania this went one step further: it was not possible to get back the surface of the land, but in 1923 all mineral wealth was nationalized, to open new sources not of production but of revenue to the State.

59. An interesting illustration in the cultural field of how neglect in some ways acted as a preservative was supplied by

Bessarabia. That Moldavian province had been annexed by Russia in 1812, but because the superimposed Russian culture and administration neglected the mass of the people altogether, when the Revolution came in 1917 the mass of the peasants after a whole century without schooling still had their "Moldavian" language and ways intact, and the province could be easily re-incorporated with Rumania with merely a formal change of officials.

60. Prof. Fei Hsiao-Tung, in the article on *Peasantry and Gentry*, described a similar relationship in China: "Rural depression at last threatens the privileges of the gentry. They begin to disintegrate. Those who cling to the traditional privileges have to resort to stronger political backing."

61. Nothing so far has displaced the classic work of Jovan Civijić, *La Péninsule Balkanique, Géographie Humaine*, Paris, 1918.

62. Just as western Socialism had stirred up the industrial groups in the East and shaped their outlook, so the eastern Peasant movement also roused momentarily an echo in the West. In France a Peasant Party was founded four weeks before the elections of 1928, but only secured 80,000 votes. Likewise before the German elections in the same year the left wing of the old *Landbund* formed a new Christian National Peasant Party which gained thirteen seats in the Reichstag. At the same time the Bavarian *Bauernbund* changed itself into a German Peasant Party which secured eight seats in the Reichstag and dominated the local situation in Bavaria; the formation of a joint peasant group in the Reichstag was foreshadowed at that time. Attempts to establish peasant parties were also made in Holland and elsewhere. The peasants were stirring in some Latin-American countries, especially in Mexico, and in various parts of Asia.—In India the Congress Party was led to adopt the program of the groups known as *Kisan sabhas* which began to appear in the thirties, and through its widespread organization has remained strongly bound to the rural interest.

63. The Bulgarian Agrarian Union polled 14.45 per cent of the votes cast in 1911, 31 per cent in 1919, 38.16 per cent in 1920 and 52 per cent in 1923. Under Alexander Stamboliski it held office from 1920 to 1923 when a counter-revolution, mainly military, led to the murder of Stamboliski and several Party leaders, while others had to go into exile, and about 20,000 peasants lost their lives in the desultory fighting which followed. While in power the Party put through many arrangements for broad co-operative action, and also the law for compulsory civic instead of military service (see I.L.O. pamphlet, *Act Respecting Compulsory Labour Service, Legislative Series, Geneva*, 1920); though denounced at the time it has served as model for many similar measures applied later by Conservative and Communist regimes alike in that region.

64. The Party polled 603,618 votes in 1920 and 907,498 votes in 1925 in the Czech territories alone. On its initiative

Czechoslovakia became the only country to have adopted an 8-hour day for agriculture, and to have worked out direct practical ties between peasant producers' co-operatives and urban consumers' co-operatives. It was the only one of the eastern countries to have included, again on agrarian initiative, members of the national minorities (the Sudeten Germans) in the Cabinet (apart from the action of the Rumanian Party in putting a Transylvanian Saxon in charge of the Under-Secretaryship for Minorities in 1928).

65. The two leading parties were the Polish People's Party, *Piast,* led by Vincent Witos, who was twice Premier, in 1920 and 1926, and *Wyzwolenie,* led by Jan Dabski. Together they formed the strongest political group in the Polish *Sejm.* The first was rather conservative, somewhat open to clerical influence, and proposed in 1926 a graduated land reform which would have taken over yearly a proportion of the large estates against a carefully regulated compensation; the second was more radical, rather anti-clerical, demanded land reform without compensation and regional autonomy for the minorities. A similar program was supported by *Stronnictwo Chlopskie* representing the small peasants, and by one or two lesser groups. During the parliamentary period, except for a short while, the two main parties had remained divided; they made up their differences only after two years of dictatorship, and in March 1931 all the politically active Peasant groups united in a single Peasant Party. The Polish groups showed a specially strong practical sense in working to get control of professional and co-operative agricultural organizations and were highly successful in this. It had the effect both of developing the political and social consciousness of the villagers and of bringing them steadily nearer the goal of controlling their own lives.

66. The first Rumanian party under Ion Mihalache was formed in 1918 by a group of village and other intellectuals. It linked up very soon with the Bessarabian Peasant Party, in which the veteran Poporanist writer, Stere, was prominent, and in 1926 with the Transylvanian National Party of Iuliu Maniu, to form together the National Peasant Party. Its chief leaders apart from Maniu and Mihalache were Dr. Nicolae Lupu and the economist Virgil Madgearu. The Party came to power in 1928; to stabilize the political situation they arranged for the return of King Carol, in 1930, but the King's public and private conduct soon led to clashes; and partly through electoral corruption, partly through political intrigues which split off several groups from the main Party, and through the ultimate suppression of parliamentary rule altogether, the peasants never had a chance to hold power again.

67. The several parts of Yugoslavia had grown up historically under different political regimes and cultural influences and hence with different social backgrounds. In Slovenia the peasants were organized mainly in the Slovene People's Party, on the lines of the Austrian Christian Socials, but had devel-

oped remarkable co-operative activities, almost wholly under clerical influence. In Serbia the Serbian Peasant League, led by Dr. Milan Gavrilović, found support in the first years after 1918 but was kept impotent by political intrigue and personal divisions; its real founder, Mihajlo Avramović, had distinguished himself as an organizer of co-operative activities and he and his fellow-workers had always emphasized this practical side. A more radical and more active peasant group in Serbia was acquiring some force in the thirties under Prof. Dragoljub Javanović; in earlier years in France he had been under Socialist influence, now he tried to further the idea of a Popular Front and also to link up with the Croat Peasant Party. The Croat Peasant Party, organized by the brothers Radić in 1904, after the First World War completely dominated Croatia and Dalmatia and was gaining strength in Western Bosnia, Herzegovina and Vojvodina. Stjepan Radić, Pavle Radić, Dr. Maček, Dr. Kosutić, Dr. Krnjević and others of its leaders held office repeatedly in coalition governments. The Party was joined by many urban elements, including the Croat Workers' Association as one of its political sections, which gave it as much a national as a social character. It was remarkable for its organization and the hold it had on its followers. It initiated many co-operative and cultural activities. Its work and influence were thwarted by arbitrary political means and also through the exploitation by the old regime of differences between Croats and Serbs; its leaders were repeatedly imprisoned or driven into exile, and Stjepan Radić and several others were victims of violence. *Dom,* the Party's paper, published since 1900, was an organ for peasants in a professional and political sense.

68. A primitive Peasant Socialist movement on Stamboliski's lines, had existed already earlier, and under András Achim, himself a peasant, engineered a strike of harvesters in 1906. The first actual party, the Smallholders' Party, was formed in 1926, led first by Gaston Gaal; it drew its inspiration from Dezsö Szabó who had initiated a fair land reform, but nothing came of it after his death in 1921. The Party represented the well-to-do peasants and drew near to the "gentry," the class of smaller landowners, and while it had a definite rural ideology it never included the mass of small peasants. By 1939 the Smallholders' Party became part of the ruling regime and so lost the power of uniting the peasantry.—Hungary well illustrated the state of things which earlier had existed all over eastern Europe, that ideological activity flourished when political activity was thwarted by reactionary regimes. Hungarian Populism was anything but homogeneous. Broadly speaking there were two phases, representing two different trends. The first arose after 1919 when disappointment with proletarian leadership led as a reaction to a feeling that the peasant was the backbone and substance of the nation. These earlier Populists were inspired by the writings of the sociologist and peasant mystic Dezsö Szabó, but they were not against the working

class. They sympathized with the workers but did not look to them for a lead. For the Russian *narodniki* assertion of their standpoint against the Marxists was a matter of life and death, but the earlier Hungarian Populists had no knowledge of Marxist writings. Their most outstanding representative was Peter Véres (who played an important part in the land reform and later was Minister of Defense until he retired in 1948) and Géza Féja (who branched off into racialism and took no part in politics after 1945). Characteristically these people looked to the peasant for a *national* rebirth; they did not think it either possible or desirable that the peasants should grow into a separate social class but believed that certain supposed innate communal instincts of the Hungarian peasants could be made the foundation for a national revival.—The other tendency emerged in the late twenties or early thirties, after a decade of middle-class misgovernment under Horthy. This group denied the peasant mystique and discarded the belief in the communal traits of the peasants as a potential factor of national renascence. Instead they held it necessary that the peasantry should at last establish itself as a class and emerge from its patriarchal state, an idea which was frustrated by the semi-feudal structure of the country. They looked upon the working class as a natural ally, but their ideological tools did not derive from Marx. To the economic and political sphere in society they added a sociological dimension and tried to derive from this the necessity for the class consolidation of the peasantry, being influenced perhaps more by the German sociologists Max Weber and Richard Thurnwald, than by Marx. The leading exponents of this trend were Ferenc Erdéi (recently Minister of Agriculture), Imre Kovaćs and Zoltan Szabó, the last two now living abroad. In many aspects the views of the two groups overlapped. Interest in peasant problems focussed in the latter period in the work of the "village explorers"; they became the leaders of rural discontent and greatly influenced also the outlook of urban reformers.

69. Lassalle, founder of the German Socialist Party, was not a Marxist and his party was not revolutionary. Its main idea was to establish workers' co-operatives in the expectation that they would destroy private capitalistic industries in competition. When the groups of Lassalle, Bebel and Liebknecht united to form the German Social Democratic Party, their famous Gotha Program (1875), with the same end in view, demanded the creation of State-aided workers' co-operatives. But for them, of course, this was only a stage towards, not the final solution of the social problem.

70. In the article already quoted Prof. Fei Hsiao-Tung said much the same thing about China: "Peasantry, the key toward understanding China, is a way of living, a complex of formal organization, individual behaviour and social attitudes."

71. See Hugh Seton-Watson, *Danubian Peasant Parties, The Economist,* London, January 11, 1947, p. 54, and *The*

Danubian Satellites, International Affairs, Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, April 1946, pp. 242-46; *East European Revolution,* London, 1950.

72. Issued by the Central Office of the International Agrarian Bureau, Prague, 1922.

73. Octavian Goga, article on *The Religious Problem,* in *Tara Noastra* (Our Country), Vol. III, No. 11, 1922.—Goga had been a noted poet and a fighter for the people's rights; in later years he formed a small nationalist-racialist reactionary group and received many favors from Carol and the anti-Peasant regimes.

74. A. Świetochowski, *Historja Chlopów Polskieh w Zarysie* (*History of the Peasants, Legacy of the Present*) (I Warsaw, 1927, II Lwów-Poznan, 1928).

75. Among these was the work of Jan Slomka, a peasant himself born into serfdom and later mayor of a Polish village. His book depicts the evolution of a Gallician village through four generations, especially the changes which came with the emancipation of the peasants, and gives a good account of their life with its subsistence farming, its rich family life and elaborate customs and traditions. An English translation by Prof. W. J. Rose was published in 1941 under the title *From Serfdom to Self-Government, Memoirs of a Polish Village Mayor, 1842-1927* (London).—Another work of this kind was that of Gyulà Illyes, son of an estate servant and himself later Hungary's leading poet, *Puszták Népe* (Budapest, 6th ed. 1943), which now ranks as a classic.—A Polish collection of *Memoirs of the Peasants* (*Pamietniki Chlopów*) was published by Prof. Krzywicki in Warsaw in 1935 and 1936.—The new spirit produced a lively flowering also in other literary fields. Apart from periodical publications connected with the movement, Czechoslovakia had a whole group of peasant authors after the First War; some of their writings were collected under the title *Echoes of the Soil* which went through several editions in a couple of years. A similar collection, *The Village Speaks,* put together the writings of twenty Croat peasants, a woman among them, in prose and verse. In Poland K. L. Koninski published a collection called *Folk Writers* (*Pisarze Ludowi*); a group of the ablest peasants even published a literary review, *Zagon,* devoted wholly to peasant literature and criticism.—"What colossal intellectual forces slumber in the peasantry and can be awakened at the right touch is shown by the fact that within the last fifteen years the Croat peasants have produced several first-rate writers of poems, short stories, novels and plays. The best known are M. Stuparić, P. Miškina and Mara Matočec, all three ranking among the foremost authors of the Balkans." (Stojan Príbićević, *op. cit.* The book contains many interesting details on these developments.) There were of course similar literary manifestations in Serbia and Bulgaria, in Rumania and in Hungary.

76. *Archiva Sociala* (1920); to which later was added also *Sociologia Românească.*

77. *Biblioteka Dziejów i Kultury Wsi;* the review was called *Wieś i Państwo* (*Village and State*).

78. The book of Jozsef Révai was first published in 1938 under a pseudonym and reprinted in 1946 with the title *Marxism and Populism.*

79. It is significant that the trend was as strong in Czechoslovakia as elsewhere, though the peasants had no great claims still to press there and political life was on a firm democratic foundation. The *Association of the Young Village* was said before the Second War to have a membership of 150,000, boys and girls as in the other peasant groupings working together. It had a powerful literary instrument in the weekly *Young Village* which later became the standard organ of Czech youth. Poland had several such organizations which covered the whole country; the most influential was the *Wici* (which meant beacons), closely connected with the Peasant Party and regarding itself as its young generation. *Seljačka Sloga,* in Croatia, with branches in almost every village and a membership of 350,000 in 1939, was a highly active cultural organization of the peasant youth.

80. Where Church and State had been closely bound together, as in Rumania, the Church also was shaken by the crumbling of the old regime, but it seemed clear that it was all part of the same stand against the old order, that it was the institution, the arbitrary authority, which was in question. Goga, in the work mentioned, had an illuminating observation on Rumania: "A hard struggle is going on around our village churches; their old walls seem to weaken, the ancient Christian ideology is suffering hasty revisions. An extraordinary crop of religious sects, with tens and hundreds of thousands of followers, has sprung up all over the country during the last few years out of that rural storm, helped by the organic weakening of the Church." Leadership of the village was passing to the abler peasants themselves, who were often preaching on behalf of one or other of the sects; such craving for spiritual adventure, after the hollow discipline of their past religious life, was as striking an illustration as any of the new temper of the peasantry. The general run of priests and teachers had too often been recruited from inferior material and could exercise authority only as long as the State they represented could command obedience.

81. Dr. Juraj Krnjević, *Peasant Movements in Eastern and Danubian Europe* (*Contemporary Review,* August, 1948).— They claimed a leading part, therefore, not simply because they were a majority and wanted power, but because they had a picture of the future which was unlike that visualized by conservative upper and middle classes or the Socialist working class—in short, by urban minds and interests. The Polish *Wici* group worked out a program, representative of peasant out-

look elsewhere, based on the slogan "Poland of the folk and for the folk." They wanted to see the peasant fully emancipated, not merely politically but also culturally and socially. It was a proclamation of peasant renascence against the spiritual evils and maladjustments which spring from excessive urbanism, of the aim of recapturing the "freshness and vitality of life for the free rural masses unspoiled by the decadent towns, rural masses which provide an inexhaustible creative force." Indeed, it wanted to "breathe the revitalizing air of the countryside into the decaying cities." (J. Rutaj, *Peasant International in Action,* London, 1948, pp. 14-6.) In a biological sense this process had always been at work, according to Professor Sorokin. He gave statistics to show that agriculture was the healthiest occupation, and that the towns in their growth depended on the country for the refreshment of their stock. The town, he said, was the "consumer" of population, the country the "producer," so that there was a continuous biological exploitation of the country by the town. (Pitirim A. Sorokin, *The Ideology of Agrarianism,* Prague, 1924 [In Russian] p. 11.)—See also Part I, Note 83, on the anti-urbanism of the early Russian Populists.

82. "All the real things are done in the villages," said a Russian peasant to an American traveller. "What kind of crops do they raise in the towns? Only Grand Dukes, Bolshevists, and drunkards! I tell you, it will be possible to have a whole countryside without any cities—only small towns and villages, all joined together by railroads. The cities we do not need at all. The cities make people think like men who have fallen sick and are lying in bed with a fever." (Ernest Poole, *The Village: Russian Impressions,* New York, 1919.) Gorki was speaking to some peasants outside Petrograd; said one of them, a fine bearded fellow: "Yes, we have learnt to fly like sparrows and to swim under water like sprats, but we don't know how to live on earth. One should first settle well on earth, and let the air come after; and not spend money on these amusements!" And after more such criticism, he concluded with a sigh: "If we had made the revolution ourselves, everything would long ago have been quiet on earth and orderly." (*Le Paysan Russe,* p. 163-5.)—Sorokin even postulated a theory of revolution upon the same grounds. Factory work is uncongenial and leads to fatigue and discontent, while land work is congenial; life in the town breeds scepticism, life in the country breeds faith; industrial work where each man is hired and has no property leads to Socialism and Communism, but the peasant is proprietor as well as laborer and so holds a more individualistic position. In short, the conditions in which workers live and work in the town are at the basis of revolutionary movements in towns, whereas conditions in the country, though probably worse, rarely lead to revolt. (Sorokin, *op. cit.,* pp. 24-25, 29-30.)—Mr. Herbert Read recently made the same point as it looks to the psychologist: "The man of the psychol-

ogist is just as much a myth as the man of the economist; and though the psychologists are not so crude as the economists, and have admitted the existence of very diverse and even opposite types of human beings, nevertheless there are certain differences which they have not taken into account. If aggressive impulses are a natural product of the infant's adaptation to external reality, and, whether repressed or active, are an explanation of man's indulgence in war and warlike activities, how does it come about that whole classes of men are decidedly less aggressive than others? . . . The most significant example is the peasant, the man occupied in the cultivation of the soil. . . . The peasant is not aggressive—not, at least, in the corporate nationalistic sense which involves men in war. And yet we cannot assume that his infantile experiences differ in any important respects from those of the town-bred proletarian or intellectual, who is such a vociferous militarist when war breaks out. We must conclude, therefore, that there is some factor in the peasant's upbringing, environment, or daily experience which discharges his aggressive impulses, which leaves him in a pacific state of mind." (*Education for Peace,* New York, 1949, pp. 25-26.)—In *The Living Jefferson,* James Truslow Adams refers to the similar view of Jefferson. The latter was in Paris at the time of the Shays rebellion, but "he was not to be fooled by the talk of the Massachusetts reactionaries, and he knew that the farmers of that state, owning their own farms and merely in temporary difficulties over debts and taxes, were not dangerous anarchists threatening the complete overturn of society. As to the last point, Jefferson was quite right. We have had similar farmer revolts against debt collectors and courts in every period of major depression in our history, but that has never meant that the farmers have been either anti-property or anti-society." (p. 197)

83. The peasant was conservative in the sense of being steady in his beliefs, and he was steady because he had acquired his views through long experience and tested them against conditions and elements he could not change by force. His reactions, said Dr. Krnjević, were therefore more natural than those of townspeople, and he had greater general knowledge than an average worker—and this was the kind of thing one heard everywhere among Danubian peasants. Silone has compared their inarticulate wisdom with "humble-looking farmhouses that have vast cellars in their depth." What he knows is, like his weather-lore, a compound of experience and the transmitted wisdom of generations. It was put in a nutshell some years ago by a peasant of stolid Anglo-Saxon stock whom the writer encountered high up in the Catskill Mountains. The man evidently did not like the rather off-hand manner in which the student who was driving asked the way; he pretended not to be able to direct us to our destination or even to know the very road on which he was standing—gaunts with his lined weather-beaten face, in soiled overalls and a pitchfork over his shoulder.

"Well," ejaculated my young friend finally, "you don't seem to know much!" "No, I don't," came the drawling reply, "but I ain't lost!" Such people are naturally less susceptible than town crowds to imitative mass moods and movements, but have more stamina in holding out. Both characteristics were noted by Dr. Krnjević when he said that the peasant's "laborious life has taught him not to expect miracles overnight. That is why he is by nature patient, persevering, and invincible when engaged in political struggle." Similarly, Mr. Tiltman in an interesting study agreed that "in comparison with the industrial worker the peasant is an element making for stability in society. . . . He is a builder, not a wrecker." (H. Hessell Tiltman, *Peasant Europe,* London, 1934.) A peasant from Voronesh, on a visit to Moscow, was saying that the workers are restless folk when there are many of them together, and therefore it would be better to have small, scattered factories. "The peasant knows how to work, only give him land. He doesn't organize strikes —the earth wouldn't let him!" (Gorki, *Le Paysan Russe,* p. 174.)—A likely further reason for this was given by a German writer who pointed out the exceptional unity of the peasant family; it formed an exclusive and independent entity in a way denied to working-class families, which continuously break up in the search for work. (Dr. Gunther Ipsen, *Das Landvolk,* Hamburg, 1933.) The family is a working as well as a social unit, and this is true from Scandinavia to China,wherever agriculture rests on peasant farming.—Prof. Hsiao-Tung, *op. cit.,* says of China that social security "is perhaps one reason why the family is so predominant in the structure of social organization in a peasant community. The family is a sufficient unit to provide the necessary and minimum social co-operation in everyday economic pursuits." The "large family" is found only among gentry. The peasant family consists generally of parents and children. "The family is a self-sufficient and self-supporting group, in which he [the peasant] maintains his existence and perpetuates his kind. It is the center from which his relations, kinship, local and professional ramify. The singularism in extension of social relations differs in principle from the pluralism in modern society." "The collective responsibility of family members in social contributions or offences has only recently been abolished by law, though it still persists in practice." "In community organization the family, not the individual, is the unit. . . . It is interesting to note that, when modern civic structure is introduced to China, the traditional form persists. The family still supersedes the individual."

84. Ante Radić, *Sabrana Djela* (Zagreb, 1936-39), I-XVIII.

85. J. Rutaj, *op. cit.,* p. 16.

86. All the constitutions of the new states of south-eastern Europe were extremely liberal in tenor. In some cases this was almost required as the price of international recognition, in others they were adopted in a moment of genuine liberal fervor at the achievement of independence. A characteristic instance

was the highly liberal Rumanian Constitution of 1866 which, copied wholesale from the Belgian and other documents, was drafted and adopted within forty-eight hours when those in control of the newly established State heard that their prince-elect, Carol of Hohenzollern, had crossed the frontier and was driving post-haste towards Bucarest. The liberal Constitution was meant as a safeguard against any autocratic inclinations of the new Germanic ruler.

87. N. Gangulee, *The Indian Peasant and His Environment,* New York, 1935. A beginning was actually made with the application of this idea on the second anniversary of India's independence, in August 1949, when village government, *panchayat raj,* was introduced in 114,000 villages of the United Provinces. The *panchayats* are elected, probably for the first time, on the basis of joint electorate, and are to be responsible for all aspects of village government—social, economic, moral and political.—Dr. Krnjević in his article had added the further point that "a village always was a stronger moral unit than a factory." The sense of community was a vital thing among the peasants of eastern Europe, providing a natural foundation for the co-operative schemes favored by their movement. They preferred to live in villages, at great cost of time and labor, rather than each on his holding, some distance away. If called upon to face some new problem the peasant rarely made any decision before he saw "what the others were doing." Even in the absence of any formal organization like the *mir,* the communal sense had everywhere persisted in the life of the village. It played its part in both good times and bad, in friendship and in quarrel. Helping each other, whether it was a matter of bringing in the harvest, or building a house or preparing a girl's dowry "chest," was a matter of course, a tradition, not an organized arrangement. In the same way differences or disputes among them were settled mostly by discussion, on a basis of equity, guided by the village elders or the priest or teacher, again as a tradition and out of that self-same sense of being one community. It is interesting to find the same vision and ideal expressed by the representative of the oldest people now gathered into the newest State, a State whose solid beginnings were laid by co-operative village settlements. In his autobiography Dr. Weizmann insists that agricultural colonization must be the foundation of the new State of Israel because "it is in the village that the real soul of a people—its language, its poetry, its literature, its traditions—springs up from the intimate contact between man and soil. . . . So for more than a quarter of a century now it has been given me to watch, with a deep and growing exultation, the steady development of our village life in Palestine. I have watched the Enek's marshes drying up and gradually growing firm enough to support more and more clusters of red roofed cottages, whose lights sparkle in the falling dusk like so many beacons on our long road home." (Chaim Weizmann, *Trial and Error,* New York, c.1949.—For

a description of the life and organization of the settlements, see also Gideon Baratz and others, *A New Way of Life: The Collective Settlements of Israel,* London, 1949. For a more general description of co-operative settlements, see Henrik F. Infield, *Cooperative Communities at Work,* New York, 1945.)—The following extracts from Dr. John Rickman's contributions to *The People of Great Russia: A Psychological Study* (Geoffrey Gorer and John Rickman, London, 1949) illustrate the communal spirit in the *mir,* which in a looser way is characteristic of village life in eastern Europe in general: "The conduct of the village *mir* is comparable in the social and economic plane with Pentecost on the spiritual. There is first a discordance of individual opinion in which everyone expresses his personal views, sometimes stridently, sometimes gently; the lack of unanimity to begin with is most striking and there is no sign of party organization. Then with an increasing number of silences (such as occur in groups of chattering people in any part of the world) defined courses of action are mentioned (the speaker claiming no prestige for voicing a policy and none being accorded him) and policy opinions are received with assent or else the hum of talk continues, meaning that opinion is not united. Once opinion is united there is a profound sense of satisfaction and of village solidarity, and the members of the village assembled at the *mir* disperse without a vote having been taken, with no committee formed and yet the feeling that each man knows what is expected of him." (p. 233). Dr. Rickman also quotes from N. P. Semenov, *The Liberation of the Peasantry in the Reign of the Emporer Alexander III* (St. Petersburg, 1894) as follows: "The decisions of the *mir* are achieved by unanimous agreement of all the members. If at the time of the meeting there are a few who are opposed, the meeting is considered incomplete and a failure. Peasants do not understand decisions by majority vote. They know in each case there can only be one proper decision and it should belong to the most clever and truthful of all. To find the truth, all members are supposed to join, and if the solution is found all the members have to comply with it. As a consequence a member who is in disagreement with the general consent has only one outlet—to separate from the *mir,* which means that he will not be a member of the village any more."—One of Dr. Rickman's stories, *The Apology,* gives an effective illustration of the working of this spirit of the *mir.* He quotes the proverbs, "The *mir* is like a wave, one man's thought is everybody's thought"; and, "the *mir* is a great man."

88. J. Rutaj, *op. cit.,* p. 15. The writer thus describes how this comes about: "In the grim fight between the workers and the capitalists for an increase in wages, the peasant almost invariably becomes victimized in that the prices for foodstuffs are lower. There appears a homogeneous front composed of the urban elements at war with each other but at one against the non-organized or poorly organized peasants. The anti-rural

solidarity of industry, commerce and the town proletariat is also supported by financial circles since the capital investment in the land is incalculably smaller than the capital investment in towns. Slogans to the effect of 'cheap bread' and low cost of living prejudice urban and industrial centres against farmers by presenting the countryside as Enemy No. 1 of the city."

89. In *Mexico, an Interpretation* (New York, 1924) Carleton Beals described the revolutionary struggle between 1910 and 1920 as "a profound reaction to the industrial and commercial invasion of the U.S. and western civilization"; its two leaders, Luis Morones and Felipe Carillo, were both Marxian Socialists, but when it came to action they directed it along lines which they felt to be true to the country's social characteristics and economic needs.—For the later agrarian revolution see the able first hand study by Eyler Simpson, *Ejido—Mexico's Way Out,* Chapel Hill, N.C., 1936.—See also in a similar vein Professor N. Gangulee's book on *The Indian Peasant.*

90. One might mention as a characteristic symptom of that widespread sentiment the Agrarian Movement during the interwar period in the Southern States of the United States, though the name was a little misleading. It was not so much agrarian in the sense of wishing a general return to the land, but rather by way of contrast to the kind of life which had developed in the industrial centers. The movement, among whose leaders were people like Alan Tate, poet and critic (who with his wife, a novelist herself, ran a farm in Tennessee), expressed, like G. K. Chesterton before, a dislike of both big business and Communism, under which the individual was free only in the sense that he was "free from all initiative and responsibility." The solution was thought to lie in a revival of personal control dispersed in as large a number of hands as possible. The Agrarians admitted that there would be less wealth in their decentralized State, but there were things more important than this, as the people may be impoverished in a State in which the aggregate wealth was enormous. We have been economists long enough, they said, it is time to be political economists as well. "Economics is a study of wealth, but political economy is a study of human wealth." (See *I'll Take My Stand,* by Twelve Southerners, New York, 1931.)—In the United States this tradition goes back to Jefferson, who aspired to an agrarian Republic so that its harmony might not be upset by "rude" artisans or, as he called it, an urban "mob-ocracy." (See W. B. Bizzell, *The Green Rising,* New York, 1926.)—In *The Living Jefferson,* p. 166, James Truslow Adams quotes as follows from Jefferson's Notes on Virginia: "Corruption of morals in the mass of cultivators is a phaenomenon of which no age nor nation has furnished an example. It is the mark set on those, who not looking up to heaven, to their own soil and industry, as does the husbandman, for their subsistence, depend on casualties and caprice of customers. Dependence begets subservience and ve-

nality, suffocates the germ of virtue and prepares fit tools for the designs of ambition."

91. The rather unhappy and uncertain position of these somewhat hybrid groups and the kind of influences which shaped them are illustrated by the outlook and fate of the group led by Dr. Jovanović. Dr. Jovanović had been assistant to the well-known sociologist Prof. Bouglé, in Paris, when he acquired some interest in Marxism, then Professor in the University of Belgrade where he lectured on agrarian economics. For his political activities among the peasants he was sentenced in 1932 by the Court for the Protection of the State to a year's imprisonment and deprived of his professorship. As leader of the left-wing Serbian Agrarian Party he was elected to Parliament in 1935 and again in 1938; a year later he founded a new party intended to collaborate closely with the Croat Peasant Party. During the Spanish Civil War he went to Barcelona to do political work in support of the Republican cause. During the Second World War Jovanović kept up his work among the peasants and early joined up with the government of Marshal Tito, but his ties with the Peasant cause led to a break and to his renewed imprisonment.

92. This summary of certain views of Dr. Jovanović is taken from a private memorandum supplied to the writer.

93. Rudolf Herceg, *Die Ideologie der Kroatischen Bauernbewegung*, Zagreb, 1923; *Islaz iz Svetske Krize* (*Pangea*), Zagreb, 1932.

94. See Note 72.

95. Rudolf Herceg, *op. cit.*

96. Another side of the Bureau's purpose was revealed by the Bulgarian economist, Petco Stainov, who in his well-informed essay, *Internationale Verte ou Pan-Slavisme Démocratique* (*Journal de Genève*, Geneva, December, 1921) suggested that the leading Czech spirits were anxious to "put to profit these attempts at creating a Green International and turn it into a Slav democratic movement, on which Czechoslovakia might rest her policy in central and eastern Europe. Thus the movement in favor of a Green International is becoming a movement of democratic Pan-Slavism inspired by the Czechoslovaks." The Bureau had branches in Poland, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, but its Pan-Slav tendency naturally made the Rumanians rather shy about it (see Virgil Madgearu's article in the volume *Doctrinele Partideler Politice*, Bucarest, 1923, p. 86); the organization broadened, however, in the following years. It is likely that in a way the Pan-Slav trait of the organization was meant to shelter the Slav peasantry of eastern Europe from the inroads of Soviet Communism, apart from giving them strength as against the more highly organized industrial forces. The Rumanian and Finnish Peasant Parties joined the Bureau in 1926 and 1927, and a meeting in 1928 gave it a formal constitution. By that time the Bureau included also Peasant parties from the three Baltic states, from Austria,

France and Switzerland; it also had connections with Italy.—Interest in the broader aspects of the Peasant cause was very marked in the ranks of the youth movement to which we have referred before. As far back as 1920 there took place on the initiative of the Polish groups a rally of Polish, Czech, Bulgarian and Serb young villagers; a more formal congress with wider membership met in Yugoslavia in 1931. In the meantime the Polish organization *Wici* had joined with youth groups from Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria to form the "Slavonic Association of Village Youth."

97. *La Politique Etrangère et l'Organisation Internationale des Agriculteurs,* M.A.B. *Bulletin du Bureau International Agraire,* 1925, Vol. VIII-IX, p. 22.

98. Karl Mečir, *Le Bureau International Agraire,* M.A.B., 1926, Vol. IV, pp. 26-29.

99. A. Bussot, *Le Bloc des Etats Agricoles de l'Europe Centrale et Orientale et son Programme* (*Revue d'Economie Politique,* Paris, 1933, p. 153). There were several other attempts to link together farmers' and peasants' organizations in furtherance of their common professional interests. An international agrarian conference, rather vague in hue, met in Warsaw in June 1925; another, more carefully organized, in Berne in September 1925. The Swiss *Bauernbund,* under its able and influential general secretary, Dr. Ernst Laur, was especially active in the twenties in trying to get some concerted action in opposition to Socialist and Communist propaganda. Dr. Laur's program rested on three main points: (1) State enterprise had rarely any place in agriculture; (2) it was a general economic interest to increase the number of independent farmers and peasants; (3) large estates should be broken up into peasant farms only where conditions were ripe for intensive farming and an active co-operative organization. (See Sigismund Gargas, *Die Grüne Internationale,* Halberstadt, 1927.) Dr. Laur's third point would not have commended itself to the eastern peasant movement, for whom a radical land reform was as much a political as a social necessity.

100. The Austrian *Bauernbund* published a periodical *Die Grüne Internationale,* the first issue of which was introduced by a somewhat discursive editorial program: "The Green International, in brief, pursues at the same time a narrower and wider aim. It endeavors to bring about an international organization of agriculture and especially of the peasantry; but once this is achieved it will turn to the great problems of a general economic organization. In the same way in which Adam Smith laid in his time the foundations of national economy, so will the reforming movement issuing from agriculture act as a pilot for the economic life of the future." (*The Literature of Agrarian Reconstruction, Manchester Guardian Reconstruction Supplement,* No. 12, 1923.)

101. *Reversal for Destruction: A Study of Political Anti-Semitism in Imperial Germany,* by Paul W. Massing (New

York, 1949), shows how anti-semitic propaganda was much less effective in rural areas among the peasants than among the urban lower middle-class. Moreover, some of the Socialist leaders—Engels, Bebel, Liebknecht among them—took a rather detached attitude on the characteristic "tactical" assumption that enmity towards Jewish capitalism would work against capitalism in general, and so would help Socialism.

102. Prof. Hsiao-Tung, *op. cit.*, says of the Chinese peasants: "They are non-aggressive because, on the one hand, extension of land beyond the ability of cultivation means little to them, and, on the other, living in a rural environment, they face no immediate threat of innovation or intrusion."

103. Carl Van Doren, *Benjamin Franklin,* Garden City, N. Y., 1941, p. 372.

104. Pitirim A. Sorokin, *op. cit.,* p. 34.

105. *The Downfall of Aristocracy in Eastern Europe.* (*The New Europe,* London, September, 1919.)

106. This term has more than once been used in these pages and yet it is not easy to define. In an adolescent society the "ruling" group or groups inevitably are in a state of flux, drawing additions to their strength from any quarter they can. In eastern Europe apart from the small landed class they contained the bourgeoisie, such as it was, and a majority of the official, professional, military and intellectual groups. Together they were not so much a conscious class as a tacit coalition who in those simple and poor peasant countries lived in luxurious capitals and were ready to stand together against anyone and by almost any means in defense of the easy pleasures of that life.

107. Timov, *op. cit.,* wrote that this must come about through a process of differentiation, which he thought already apparent. Even then the mass of the peasants, in his view, were more radical than the leaders. While the latter wanted to keep the movement within the bounds of "bourgeois legality," it might well assume revolutionary forms and escape their control. Their experience with political rights was bound to teach the peasants that parliamentarism was a huge fraud.

108. *Dreptatea,* Bucarest, January 15, 1929.

109. See Part I, Note 89.—Rădulescu-Motru was one of Rumania's ablest thinkers and outstanding as a high-minded public man. The pamphlet suggesting that alliance, in 1924, was perhaps a reaction against the spurious liberalism of the Liberals then in power. It was characteristic of the man and of the movement that later he joined the Peasant Party.

110. Gorer and Rickman, *op. cit.,* p. 105.

111. Article on *Peasantism and Town Workers* (*Aurora,* Bucarest, July 19, 1923).—Collaboration with the workers was urged consistently by the Youth groups in Poland, the Ploughmen's Front in Transylvania, the *Pladne* group in Bulgaria and that of Dr. Jovanović in Serbia; therefore they fully supported

the social program of the Social-Democrats and upheld also the principle of a proper sphere of influence for industrial trade unions. The Peasant program devised in London in 1942 also disclaimed any antagonism towards the industrial workers and many of its points, and all of its political claims, should have proved acceptable to Socialist parties, had conditions after the war made for a normal political life.

112. In the U.S.A. neither Socialism nor Populism had a strong movement of its own, but attempts at Farmer-Labor co-operation wherever tried usually succeeded in getting local control for progressive policies.

113. On the other hand, the Rumanian Peasant Party was bitterly attacked for breaking a miners' strike in 1929 and a railwaymen's strike in 1933. Apart from the responsibility of power, the Peasants justified themselves with the claim that these strikes were instigated by disruptive Communist groups.

114. *Tzaranism* (*Na Agrarnom Fronte,* Nos. 7-8, 1926).

115. Vladko Matchek [Maček], *The International Peasant Union* (*The Tablet,* London, March 19, 1949).

116. Alex Friedrich, *Zusammenbruch der Landwirtschaftlichen Weltproduktion,* Berlin (*Die Internationale,* June 1921).

117. Gorer and Rickman (*op. cit.,* p. 235) provide a further instance of this: "A peasant, after asking how we did things in the West, said to me when discussing the new regime, 'We peasants will give them thirty years and then see what they make of the job.' "

NOTES TO PART FOUR

1. Edition of 1937, p. 151.

2. *Neuadel aus Blut und Boden.*—It was given practical expression by Darré in the *Erbhofgesetz* of 1933, which had the purpose of creating for old-established peasant families substantial holdings of 25 to 125 hectares in perpetual entail.

3. *Völkischer Beobachter,* December 10, 1939.—This attitude was strongly reasserted when the Party came to power. In a speech in February, 1933, Hitler said: "We wish to build up this people, first of all with the German peasant as its foundation. He is the essential pillar on which all political life must rest. Since I fight for the future of Germany I must fight for the German soil and the German peasant. It is he who gives us men for our cities; he has been through the millennia the eternal source of our strength, and he must continue to be supported." And in his May Day speech of that year, he added: "The fundamental principle in any 'organic economic development' is that there can be no recovery which does not begin at the root of national and economic life, the peasant. From him the way leads to the worker and then to the intellectual." (Text of Hitler's speeches in *Dokumente der deutschen Politik,* Berlin, I, 1935, pp. 10 & 149.)

4. The Vichy Minister of Agriculture, Caziot, declared in 1942 that their agrarian policy was meant to be first of all a new population policy.

5. A war-time German broadcast put this quite plainly: "Peasant ownership of the land on the German pattern, to supersede the Liberal concept of property and inheritance in land, that is the first condition for the incorporation of eastern agricultural economy in the European self-sufficiency plan which is to make the Continent forever immune against the threat of blockade."

6. This in retrospect is the verdict of Mr. F. A. Voigt in an article on *The Concentration Camp* (*The Manchester Guardian,* May 24, 1945).

7. See article in *Frankfurter Zeitung,* January 4, 1942.

8. See *Reports submitted to the Third Congress of the Labour and Socialist International,* Brussels, August 1928. Zurich, 1928.

9. The Austrian Social-Democrats, placed as they were at the point where the two regions met, adopted in 1925 an agrarian program which served as something of a model for the program of several other Continental parties; the British Labour Party published its Programme for Agriculture in the following year; the German party adopted a program, differing in some details from the Austrian, in 1927; the French party produced a draft program which contained a section on Socialism and Agriculture; the Czechoslovak Socialists worked out, also in 1927, an agrarian program on the lines of the Austrian one; while the Polish Socialist Party did not get its program for agriculture until 1937, though it embodied a policy already agreed before.

10. "Der Staat ist etwas gründlich anders als vor dreissig Jahren." (*Programmentwurf der deutschen Sozialdemokratischen Partei Ein Kommentar,* Berlin, 1921, p. 9.)

11. *Report to the Third Congress, op. cit.,* p. 5.

12. "Mit seiner weiteren Entwicklung wird das Genossenschaftswesen in immer höherem Masse im Stande sein, den Bauern die Vorteile des Grossbetriebes nutzbar zu machen." (*Programm und Organisation der deutschösterreichischen Sozialdemokratie,* Vienna, 1927, p. 42.)

13. *Le Populaire,* Paris, November 24, 1927.

14. *Kampf um Wald und Weide,* Vienna, 1925.

15. Bauer, *op. cit.,* p. 227.

16. Bauer, *op. cit.,* p. 229.

17. Bauer, *op. cit.,* p. 235 ff.

18. *Programmentwurf der Sozialdemokratischen Partei,* pp. 24-25.

19. *Sozialdemokratischer Parteitag in Kiel,* Berlin, 1927, p. 273.

20. F. Baade, *Sozialdemokratische Agrarpolitik,* Berlin, (*n.d.*) p. 32.

21. The Labour Party's experts saw in the existence of ab-

solute and differential rent, as a consequence of private ownership of land, a decisive obstacle to technical progress in agriculture and to "justice to the community"; they were inclined to look upon the continued control of production by so many independent farm units as incompatible with a system of Socialist planning. (See, e.g., Stafford Cripps, *The Economic Planning of Agriculture,* London 1934.) *The Land and Agriculture,* the Party's official statement, on the whole favored the large farm as more productive, and all the measures advocated by the Party tended that way. Marketing was to be the chief means of control, so as to co-ordinate all production with the importation of foodstuffs; Dr. Addison's "Marketing Act" was the first attempt at planned agriculture in England.

22. *Programm und Organisation der deutschösterreichischen Sozialdemokratie,* p. 40.

23. *Ibid.,* p. 42.

24. "The mass of the people, under Labour's plan, will enjoy increasingly the food products of their own countryside. . . ." (British Labour Party, *How Labour will Save Agriculture,* London, 1934, p. 24.)

25. *The Fourth Congress of the Labour and Socialist International in Vienna,* 1931. London, 1937, p. 791.

26. *Memorandum Presented by the Workers' Delegation to the International Economic Conference,* 1928, Section V, p. 52.

27. "What the Social-Democrats have been able to tell the peasants about land reform, about help for peasant farming, about co-operatives, about fiscal and economic policy or even about general political questions, is quite inadequate. The Social-Democratic agrarian programs . . . especially have remained quite behind the situation brought about by the agricultural crisis." (Rădăceanu, *Sozialdemokratische Bauernprogramme, Der Kampf,* 1932, p. 107.)—The Russian Social Democratic Party had learned better, if rather too late. Its Central Committee circulated in November 1927, apparently also within Russia, a two-page pamphlet in which they urged the need for political equality between workers and peasants, so that the two might be able to negotiate with each other "freely, as organized classes." (Translation in the British Labour Party's *Documents and Discussions,* Vol. V. No. 2, January, 1928.)

28. See Gerber, *The Agrarian Problem in German Social Democracy,* Moscow, 1929 (in Russian).—Trade unions of farm laborers were to be found also in the Polish Trade Union movement, which was closely linked with the Socialist Party; and smaller unions were included in the Social-Democratic organization in Austria and Czechoslovakia. A union of farm workers was connected also with the British Labour Party.

29. Rudolf Schlesinger, *Marx: His Time and Ours,* p. 329.

30. Rural Wales is still very "land conscious," to a degree which is hardly known in England. Proposals for using even very poor land for such purposes as afforestation or military training still meet with keen opposition; on the question of af-

forestation it is suggestive, however, that the National Farmers' Union is adamant in its opposition, whereas the Farm Workers' Organization is strongly in favor of it. The explanation is to be found in part in the *National Farming Survey of England and Wales,* London, 1946, which has an analysis (p. 20) of the percentage of owner-occupiers in Wales and England respectively. The high percentage in Wales, together with the fact that some counties have a long waiting list of applicants for statutory smallholdings, suggests that small farmers and farm laborers are keenly competing for a chance to acquire a holding of their own.

31. See report of speech by Mr. Tom Williams in *The Manchester Guardian,* January 20, 1950.

32. There may be good economic reasons for such a policy, but the peculiar effect from a Socialist point of view is that any class levelling has well-nigh been put out of court in agriculture. The policy has aggravated the old state of "social statics" on the land. Capitalist farming is comprehensively protected under this Labour policy: it is protected against the public competition of collectivized farming; against the economic competition of free private enterprise, from abroad and from within; and it is protected against any social competition of newcomers arising from among capable laborers. "Farmers, after all, have never been so prosperous," a Socialist writer asserted recently. (*Election Diary, New Statesman and Nation,* London, February 11, 1950.) The laborer has as little chance now to get a holding as when semi-feudal squires ruled the village; and the tendency towards mechanization, and the choice of crops encouraged by government, have still more reduced the chances of the small man, as mechanization and corn crops need more capital and favor larger units. The best the rural workers can hope for is an improvement in wages and conditions from a policy which somewhat perversely is actually perpetuating them as a class. Mr. Herbert Morrison, Leader of the House of Commons, in a speech to the National Union of Farm Workers in May 1948, offered instead the bucolic consolation that agriculture was the country's leading industry, and life on the land something about which he grew almost lyrical, urging a return to it. (See also footnote 132.)

33. *Entmachtung des Grossbesitzes—Entfaltung des Klein und Mittelbesitzes,* in *Grundsätze Sozialistischer Politik,* Hamburg, 1946, p. 43.

34. The Land Reform Programme of the Polish Socialist Party, adopted at the twenty-third annual congress in Cracow, February 1934, and incorporated into the new Party Programme (ch. IX) adopted by the twenty-fourth annual congress in February 1937, contained among others the following provisions: The PPD, representing the laboring masses in town and country reaffirms the common interests of workers and peasants; the new Socialist order requires a complete transformation of the economy of the country, above all the socialis-

zation of Industry, Mining, Banking, and the expropriation of the big estates. Smallholdings are not to be expropriated; the aim of the social revolution is to free them from oppression and exploitation with the help of the following measures;

(1) Expropriation of all big estates, including those belonging to the Church, without compensation;

(2) Distribution of land to laborers and to peasants without land or with dwarf holdings which need additional land to become self-supporting;

(3) A small number of model farms as well as rural industries with their necessary complement of land will be retained by the state and turned into co-operative farms by leasing them to peasant co-operatives;

(4) Forests will be taken over by the State;

(5) Expropriated livestock and machinery suitable for peasants will be distributed to peasant holders; big machinery to state farms or peasant co-operatives;

(6) To increase the productivity of labor and soil, special provisions are made for the development of all types of co-operatives; membership remains voluntary. Among measures favoring the co-operatives were included special loans, preferential tax assessments, etc.;

(7) To prevent speculation in grain a uniform organization for grain marketing, based on the co-operatives, will be introduced; prices of industrial products are to be fixed on a level (?) with prices for agricultural produce;

(8) At the request of rural communities work for amelioration, integration, and development of land is to be undertaken by the State;

(9) The State undertakes the following activities to further agriculture (follows the usual list of measures concerning agricultural education, seed and fertilizer loans and supplies, credit organization);

(10) A program of public works to provide employment for the surplus population;

(11) Remission of tax debts; tax reform for the benefit of the rural population by consolidating various indirect taxes;

(12) Remission of all debts incurred by small farmers through acquisition of land under the first land reform on onerous terms. Debts resulting from the partitioning of land between members of one family will be adjusted and consolidated;

(13) Special terms for professional insurance;

(14) Inclusion of the rural population in the social insurance scheme.

35. Minutes of the Second Congress of the Socialist and Labour International, Marseilles, 1925, p. 39.

36. Article on Tărănism, p. 15-16.

37. Ilie Moscovici, *Lupta de Clasa si Transformarea Sociala,* in *Doctrinele Partidelor Politice,* Bucarest, 1923, p. 302.

38. Serban Voinea, *Marxism Oligarchic,* Bucarest, 1926, p. 246.

39. At the Conference of the Esthonian Socialist Labour Party, in December 1930, to give an illustration, speakers urged that the agrarian problem "must be correctly valued by the Socialists in order to avoid the political isolation of the working class." But after a lively discussion all that was decided was to put off a decision on an agrarian policy till the party's next conference.

40. Except in Yugoslavia, where the Tito regime had been able to make its own way, without help from Moscow. In Poland, for instance, Socialists who had fought in the underground movement, and therefore under instructions from the London Government, had now to apply individually for membership of the official Socialist Party (P.P.S.), and many refused to do so. (*Tribune,* London, November 9, 1945.)

41. A sequel to that attitude has been played recently even in the second exile. In December 1949, the exiled Polish parties set up in London a Polish Political Council, which aspires to be a kind of free Parliament in exile. The Peasant Party has boycotted the Council because it refuses to work with it on the basis of the legal continuity of the State, as it emerged from the totalitarian Constitution of 1935—most Polish political parties having in fact boycotted the elections held under that Constitution. The Socialists, however, have joined the new Council, with the result that it now consists mainly of Socialists and Right-wing National-Democrats. (*The Manchester Guardian,* December 21, 1949.)

42. Cf. *Agrarprobleme.* Internationales Agrarinstitut, Moscow, Vol. II, parts 3-4, 1929: Levin, *Die Agrarkrise in Frankreich;* I. Schafir, *Das Agrarprogramm der Arbeiterpartie Grossbritanniens.*

43. *Marx und die Agrarfrage* (Symposium). Internationales Agrarinstitut, Moscow, 1933.

44. N. Baryshew: *Marx über den Gross und Kleinbetrieb in der Landwirtschaft,* Berlin, 1922.

45. Seventh Congress of the Communist International, *Abridged Stenographic Report of Proceedings,* Moscow, 1939, p. 25.

46. *Ibid.,* p. 36.

47. *Ibid.,* p. 192.

48. *Die Bauerninternationale* No. 1, Berlin, 1924, pp. 176-78.

49. This Rumanian incident is discussed from the Comintern point of view in the article by T. Marin, *The Role of Rumania in Intervention against the U.S.S.R., Communist International,* Vol. VIII, No. 10, May 15, 1931, pp. 295 ff.

50. V. Kolarov, *The World Agrarian Crisis and the Peasant Movement, Communist International,* Vol. VII, No. 9, May 1, 1931, pp. 265 ff.

51. Boris Stephanov, *The Concentration of Democratic*

Forces in Rumania, Communist International, Vol. XIV, No. 3, 1937, p. 943. See also Lucretiu Pătrăscanu, *Problemele de Baza ale Româiei Mari,* Bucarest, 1944.

52. Seventh Congress of the Communist International, *op. cit.,* pp. 523-27.

53. He then lost his position because he was said to have become "the exponent of bourgeois ideology and detached himself from the masses, and from the ideology and principles of the working-class."

54. The Communists would implicitly include in this the whole of the capitalist class. Pătrăscanu (pp. 264-78) took the Social-Democrats to task for attempting to make a distinction between the Rumanian oligarchy and the bourgeoisie; he pointed out (as Madgearu had pointed out in regard to the whole of the proletarian Left) how this led to a tendency to collaborate with the enlightened despotism of the eastern dictators, in this case that of King Carol, because of its supposedly antioligarchic purpose.

55. Fitzroy Maclean, *Escape to Adventure,* Boston, 1950, p. 364, describing the Naples conference between Mr. Churchill and Marshal Tito on August 12, 1944: "Finally, while saying or doing nothing that might be interpreted as undue interference in the internal affairs of another country, he (Mr. Churchill) managed to include in his remarks certain counsels of moderation. One, I remember, concerned the collectivization of agriculture. 'My friend Marshal Stalin . . . told me the other day that his battle with the peasants had been a more perilous and formidable undertaking than the battle for Stalingrad. I hope that you, Marshal,' he added, 'will think twice before you join such a battle with your sturdy Serbian peasantry.' "

56. Robert E. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins,* New York, c. 1948, p. 900.—That was indeed the attitude taken by the Soviet Government also in 1939, when as part of the attack on Finland, a People's Government was set up at Terijoki, a little seaside village just across the Russian border, under the leadership of Otto Kuusinen, an old revolutionary who had lived in Moscow for years. The People's Government "invited" the Red Army to join in the struggle against the Government at Helsinki, but at the same time uttered the warning that Finland would not be a Soviet state, "because a Soviet regime cannot be established by the efforts of the Government alone without the consent of the people, especially the peasantry." It announced a program of internal reforms which included the confiscation of the land of large owners, "without touching the land and property of the peasants"; the confiscated land was to be distributed to the poorer peasants. (*Time,* N.Y., December 11, 1939.)

57. Statement at the Second Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Rumanian Workers' Party, June 10-11, 1948: "To every Party member it must be clear that the class struggle

takes place not only in the towns but also in the countryside, and that among the peasantry there are also big class differentiations. The real interests of the toiling peasantry cannot be ensured except through struggle, in alliance with and under the leadership of the working class, against capitalist exploitation, for restricting the capitalist elements in the countryside, and for strengthening the position of the people's democracy."

58. Manifesto of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of September 8, 1945, in Wilhelm Pieck, *Die Bodenreform im Spiegel der Presse,* Hanover, 1947.

59. "The German Socialist Unity Party declares itself for the unconditional assurance of the peasant's private ownership. . . . The peasants received the land distributed to them as private property, and nobody can take that property away from them again. . . ." (W. Pieck, *op. cit.,* p. 19.)

60. Foreign Policy Report, *U.S. Policy in Europe,* February 1946, Foreign Policy Association, New York.

61. A valuable instrument of Communist penetration is the weekly *La Terre,* founded in 1938, now with a circulation of some 300,000 copies, because of its useful practical advice, but which also serves as a reminder of Communist interest in the peasants.

62. See W. Hilton Young, *The Italian Left: A Short History of Political Socialism in Italy,* New York, 1949.

63. *The Manchester Guardian,* December 22, 1948.

64. Besides political and social aims there were also certain national motives. In 1919 Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Rumania used the land reforms for taking over land belonging to foreign landlords and minorities and settling it, especially in border regions, with their own peasants; after 1945 this kind of settlement was easier in parts where as in Hungary many estates had been abandoned by their owners while the German retreat, or where whole German minorities had gone, as in the Vojvodina and Srem provinces of Yugoslavia, and in the Sudetenland. Poland was a special case; the whole state had shifted westwards, and her rural population was reduced by almost a quarter while agricultural land only by some 6 per cent, so that by transferring peasants to the new territories for political reasons she could also hope to reduce rural overpopulation in the old parts.

65. In Hungary in the summer of 1945 only half the land was tilled, but by 1946 the proportion was 93 per cent. The immediate economic aim, as a Polish leader put it, was to insure the peasants' existence for at least three years before broader reforms were possible; whatever the industrial plans, the great destruction of industrial plants made the transfer of rural population to industry impossible for the time being.

66. The measures differed in detail in the several countries, but the similarity between them was so marked that it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that all were part of a general policy adopted for the whole area, and that their inspiration

came from one and the same source. The expropriated owners were allowed to retain a low maximum of their land—this varied from about 125 acres in Hungary, where there had been virtually no previous land reform, to about 45 acres in Bulgaria, where there were no large estates at all to be divided up. Compensation was not given, except in rare instances and on a very low scale. The amount of land allotted to the new peasant owners was seldom more than about 12 acres, for which they were usually required to pay the value of one or two years' harvest, payments in money or in kind being spread over a number of years; in the case of the new territories of Poland the acreage was considerably more, in order to attract settlers. Even on these scales, there was not enough land to go round, and legislation provided that new holdings should not be subdivided or sold. Pastures and forests usually passed into state or communal ownership; some land (for instance in Poland 200,000 hectares) was retained by the state for experimental farms. Tractors and machinery were taken over by the state for use in setting up tractor and machinery stations; smaller equipment and livestock were distributed to the new holders of land, but there was often a noticeable lack of necessary equipment and animals on the new small holdings.

67. As late as 1945 local Soviet commanders were making runaway landlords offers to return provided they undertook to farm the land themselves. (Information kindly supplied by Dr. Henry L. Roberts, of Columbia University, who at the time was attached to the U.S. Mission to Rumania and had an opportunity of seeing such agreements in northern Moldavia.)

68, In the Soviet zone of Germany, the German reform was decreed by order of the Soviet military authority, in September 1945. The first German law was that of Saxony of September 3 which served as model for the others; details of the German laws were given in the *Frankfurter Zeitung,* September 12, 1945. The German and Rumanian laws started with the same formula, that agrarian reform was a national, economic and social necessity. In both laws local committees of poor peasants were to prepare the land lists; peasants with less than 5 hectares were entitled to land, payment to be in money or kind, with a 10 per cent payment in the first year, though poor peasants could obtain a three-year moratorium; the total price was the equivalent of one year's harvest; new properties could not be sold, mortgaged, leased or subdivided. Farm machinery was to be put into a common pool. The only difference between the two laws was that in Germany only properties over 100 hectares were to be expropriated, but in Rumania all above 50 hectares.

69. "To-day the governments of the new democracies know that the present small peasant holdings are not a workable proposition and that the peasants' road to wealth lies in co-operation and the uniting of small holdings into large collective estates. The example of the U.S.S.R., where collective farming

has resulted in a great increase in yield and in peasant welfare, is having a tremendous influence, and the movement for setting up co-operative agriculture is growing apace. For the present these co-operatives unite only the most progressive peasant elements, but it may be confidently expected that they will help in future to rebuild agriculture on a Socialist basis." (Quoted in *East Europe,* February 19, 1948.)

70. E. Varga, *World Economy and World Politics,* Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. (quoted in *The Manchester Guardian,* December 19, 1947).

71. *The Times,* London, July 6, 1948.

72. "Even with land reform farming will continue to be inefficient, and the peasants admitted it, but apparently small scale farming is the way they wanted it, and that is the way it will be, until the projected peasant co-operatives can work out new methods adapted to the new conditions of ownership in Poland." (From an interview given in January 1945; quoted in *Bulletin of Statistics,* Oxford, June 30, 1945.)

73. B.B.C. *News Digest,* April 24, 1945.—As late as 1948 the Polish Minister of Trade and Industry, Minc, declared that the peasants would not lose their title to individual ownership by joining co-operative farms. (*The Manchester Guardian,* October 13, 1948.) When in November 1947 the Rumanian Minister of Agriculture announced his four-year plan he also declared that "the government's policy will be increasingly a policy of liberation for the peasants, not so much control or coercion, but guidance, advice and collaboration." (*Foreign Crops and Markets,* Vol. 56, No. 5, Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, February 2, 1948, pp. 84-85.)

74. Equipment and livestock were lacking and the new regimes were diverting the bulk of resources to industry. The peasants' own needs and the lack of consumers' goods were tending to keep agricultural supplies in the village. (Minister Bertold said in the interview already quoted: "The peasants now have land. They have become richer and are thus becoming consumers of industrial goods. Their number is vast. To satisfy their demand it will be necessary to expand industry and thus employ more workers.") The land reforms had been generally accompanied by moderate arrangements for the collection of grain, usually by means of quotas at fixed prices, but the new regimes found it as difficult as had the Soviets to extract supplies from the peasants. Pressure on them had to be increased or indirect methods used. One such method was the Rumanian currency devaluation of 1947, timed to coincide with the end of the harvest, just as the old capitalist corn merchants used to reduce the prices offered when the peasants were short of money and forced to sell part of their crops for whatever they could get. (*East Europe,* London, October 9, 1947.) The Polish Minister, Minc, complained in November 1947: "There is still a very serious disproportion between the

tempo of our industrial and our agricultural development. If our agriculture were to lag considerably behind our industry we would find ourselves without a basis for further industrial development. The number of industrial workers would continue to rise . . . and we might find ourselves without enough food for them. This disproportion between industrial and agricultural progress must be substantially reduced by increasing production in agriculture. . . . The main task of the Peasants' Mutual Aid organization is to draw up a plan for the rationalization of agriculture, lay down what must be done by every commune and area this year and in the following years." (*East Europe,* December 4, 1947.) Pressure for industrial expansion increased after the formation of the Comecom, in January 1949. (The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, or Comecom, composed of representatives from Soviet Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria and Albania, as the economic counterpart of the political Cominform.) (Some statistical evidence was given in *The World Today,* London, August 1949, in an article on *The Peasant in Eastern Europe's Economic Planning.*)

75. *Memorandum of the International Peasant Union,* Washington, D. C., submitted to the General Assembly of the United Nations, October 1948, p. 19.

76. Lenin, *Selected Works,* Vol. XXII, p. 13.

77. In Czechoslovakia, for instance, there were practically no landless laborers left, which made it difficult for the larger peasants to carry on; they were also dependent on the local committees for the allotment of fertilizers, equipment and replacements, etc., and these committees were Communist. More direct pressure was put on them everywhere through economic and fiscal policy. The peasants had to deliver to the authorities specific quotas of their produce, generally according to a predetermined plan for the year, not according to the results of their harvest (Juraj Krnjević, *op. cit.*), at prices fixed by the authorities, while the peasants had to buy manufactures and industrial goods also at fixed and unfavorable prices; the distribution of goods was usually in Communist hands. In most parts taxation discriminated against the richer peasants, who also had little prospect of receiving credits or permits for building and such things. Czechoslovak regulations of 1949 empowered the local Communist committees to confiscate the machines of peasants if they were "not being used." (*The Times,* London, October 18, 1949.) Kolarov admitted in a speech before the Executive of the Bulgarian Communist Party that some land had been confiscated from "unwilling" peasants and that others had had to accept poorer land for good land taken from them. (*The Economist,* London, August 20, 1949.)

78. *The Times,* London, December 18, 1948.

79. This was described by Dimitrov as the "foremost principle" in the whole policy, and he urged friendly relations therefore also with peasants who did not belong to co-operatives.

(Speech to the First National Congress of Co-operative Farmers, February 1947.)

80. The article by Eduard Kardelj on *Agricultural Co-operatives in a Planned Economy,* published in *Kommunist,* Belgrade, organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, in September 1947, gives the best Communist exposition available on this subject. Substantial extracts from the article are therefore given below (but not necessarily textually):

Paragraph 17 of the Constitution says: "The State will give special consideration and help to national co-operative organizations." This is a direct result of the realization by the Communist Party long before their victory of the role of co-operatives in a capitalist system and their importance in a Socialist state. Even before the war co-ops were widespread, but they had reactionary tendencies. To-day co-ops are of special importance because they constitute the most convenient organizations for fitting the small producers, peasants and others, into the planned Socialist economy.—But the role of the co-ops under capitalism and our present society is very different and that explains why the co-ops had to a large extent to be reorganized. It is well known that the co-op movement developed its own ideology—gradual and reform socialism; peasant democracy and peasant socialism. Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin have shown often enough that co-ops can contribute only in a small way to improvements for the working class but are in the main instruments of capitalist exploitation. Their capitalist character was inescapable.—Particularly agricultural co-ops led to capitalist development in the village. On one side they led to peasant associations which have contributed to some extent to agricultural progress. On the other hand they accelerated the enrichment of the big peasants and the village bourgeoisie, they increased the indebtedness of small and medium peasants and their dependence on banks and village merchants, so that the economic situation of small and medium peasants really became worse.

Now the situation is different: (i) The State supports the working peasants and democratic co-ops, the small and medium peasants. (ii) Formerly co-ops were controlled by finance capital, now they are part of our socialist system. (iii) Capital accumulation from agricultural production benefits no longer the capitalist elements in the village but the working peasantry and contributes to agricultural progress.

Lenin and Stalin have declared that a peasant economy is not by itself capitalist. Stalin says: "Peasant economy is not capitalist economy, it is a small goods economy, that is one at the cross roads to capitalism or Socialism. It can develop in the capitalist direction as is now the case in capitalist countries, or towards Socialism, as is bound to happen in our country under the dictatorship of the proletariat." On the other hand Stalin and Lenin say that small scale production leads to capi-

talism and bourgeoisie. But there is no contradiction in this. Under conditions of spontaneous development small-scale peasant production—even if not capitalist in itself—will produce capitalist tendencies, but under conditions of Socialist development and with the conscious effort of the State this same small-scale peasant production will develop in a Socialist direction. Only this development will not be automatic and spontaneous but under planned direction with the necessary means of organization, which will enable the peasantry through their own experiences to become convinced that this is the right direction.

All this shows that capitalist tendencies in the co-ops will not automatically disappear and that for some time we will have to fight against them. (Follow tables showing the backwardness of Yugoslav agriculture.) Capitalist industrialization ruined the peasantry and led to colonial exploitation. Our industrialization on the contrary will mean progress in agriculture, giving the peasant better technique, machinery, artificial fertilizers, tools, etc., thus increasing productivity in agriculture.

But we must not close our eyes to the fact that "atomization," the dwarf farm structure, is a brake to progress. I will not go into details of the advantages of large-scale production. The incontrovertible fact is that reconstruction of our agriculture is a necessary condition for a rise in productivity. In practice that means introducing such organizational forms as will make possible planning, scientific method, skilled management combined with the most progressive methods of agricultural technique. The most convenient form of economic organization in our dwarf farm economy is co-operation. Therein lies its present importance, which cannot be overestimated. Such agricultural co-operation will, as Stalin says, make possible "large-scale agriculture, which can accumulate capital, enlarge production and reorganize the agricultural basis of our national economy." (*Foundations of Leninism,* p. 285.)—This is one of our most difficult and most important tasks, the solution of which will determine the tempo of our economic plans and developments. This task is hampered by the backwardness of our agriculture, by the power of small-scale tradition and a mentality which exists in our villages as a result of their historical development.—Any new general organizational forms must not lead to direct bureaucratic interference. Lenin said: "Soviet authorities must not use any kind of compulsion in the creation and progress of co-ops. Only such associations are of value which peasants create out of their free initiative and the advantages of which they have seen confirmed in practice." (*Selected Works,* Vol. XXIV, p. 174.)—It is clear that co-ops will only be successful if they represent the will of the peasant masses and develop with them.

Three conclusions emerge: (i) Agriculaural co-ops are the fundamental organizational forms in the battle for the reconstruction of our agriculture, for raising the productivity, living

standards and cultural level of our working peasantry. (ii) They will not automatically work in this direction, but need systematically planned management, daily help and elimination of capitalist remnants. (iii) Such co-op development cannot be secured with administrative measures but only through the will and conscious activities of the peasants themselves.

There exist to-day four categories of co-ops in our country: (i) Credit co-ops—formerly instruments of finance capital. Reorganized they can be useful to collect and activate peasant saving, at present hoarded to a large extent, and also for private loans. Under direct financial state control they can play an important part in financing local activities, small co-op industrial enterprises, workshops, etc. (ii) Buying and selling co-ops —the predominant form of co-op in our country—can be useful for the realization of the three-year plan in agriculture. Naturally they must become more than just small village shops, as they mostly are to-day. They are the lowest form of co-op, but a good basis for further progress. (iii) Production co-ops —to-day of special importance. Industrialization, as provided by the five-year plan cannot supply all our needs. We must encourage local activities, handicrafts, small local industries, etc. The processing of agricultural, dairy, forestry products, particularly into articles of daily consumption, can be helped enormously by such co-ops. The tendency to underestimate these possibilities is very harmful. (iv) Labor co-ops—the highest form of co-op. They can raise living and cultural levels of their members and are in numbers and economic power making rapid progress. They should be encouraged and helped in order to develop into shining examples of agricultural farms.

There are at present several hundreds of labor co-ops but it must be realized that they represent only the action of the most progressive part of our peasants, not of the masses. To-day they cannot be a decisive instrument in the reconstruction of our agriculture. To think so would be a sectarian mistake, we would run ahead where the consciousness of our peasantry could not follow and would thus isolate ourselves from the peasant masses.—It would be best to develop one single type of labor co-op which would unite within itself the other three branches (credit, supply and marketing and production). This single type is already developing. But it cannot and should not be attempted by administrative decrees. The most likely form —confirmed by our present experience—is for the buying and selling co-op to take over credit, processing and production, machine tractor and other functions, and so to develop into a powerful collective unit in our agriculture. Such co-ops can be supported by the State, materially and through expert and skilled help. Such co-ops would also demonstrate to the peasant the untruth propagated by our enemies that we intend to destroy the peasant and want to drive him into *kolkhoz* farms.—But co-ops will, apart from their economic functions, play an important political role. They must activate the broad masses of

the peasants, make them conscious of their part in the five-year plan, educate them, etc.—The question of the development of our co-op system is one not only of direct management but of all-round help—economic, political, organizational, cultural—from the government as well as from all national organizations. An organizationally and economically well-founded system of agricultural co-operation is the most convenient and most efficient means for a planned reconstruction of our agriculture.

81. There were few co-operative farms in the summer of 1948. An English observer who had visited eastern Europe in the spring of that year reported that in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, where Communist policy was more evident and comprehensive, some collective farms existed and the trend was to try to win over the peasants by education and incentives, but that in the more northern countries such co-operation as existed was generally voluntary and there was no talk of collectivization. (H. D. Walston, *Plans and Peasants, The Observer,* London June 6, 1948.)—One of the Cominform's accusations against the Yugoslav Communist Party was that its policy of liquidating the peasants was "adventurous and un-Marxist," as the conditions for large-scale collectivization did not exist "as long as the majority of the working peasants were not convinced of the advantages of collective farming."

82. N. P. Farberov, *New Points in the Development of the People's Democracies,* Moscow, January 1949.

83. *The Manchester Guardian,* August 14, 1948.

84. *The Times,* London, December 18, 1948.

85. *The Manchester Guardian,* July 3, 1948.

86. *The Manchester Guardian,* December 12, 1948.

87. *The Economist,* November 13, 1948.

88. *The Times,* London, July 6, 1948, quoting the *Gazeta Ludove.*

89. *The Manchester Guardian,* October 13, 1948, article by Alexander Werth on *Poland's Momentous Autumn:* "It is the first carefully thought out document following up, in strictly practical terms, the Cominform's agrarian recommendations. . . ." The 1 per cent collectivized farms were to be, for quality, so impressive that many more would come into being voluntarily after 1951. The article attributes great value to Minc's speech, which reads indeed as if it were meant to instruct the Cominform on the realities of the policy it had so brusquely advocated.

90. *The New York Times,* July 17, 1949.

91. *The Times,* London, July 29, 1948.

92. *The Economist,* August 20, 1949.

93. *The Times,* January 25, 1949, contrasted the rapid collectivization in Czechoslovakia with that in Poland, "where the advance is still on almost evolutionary lines."

94. In Czechoslovakia some two thousand collective farms were established in 1948-49; in Yugoslavia reports put the

number variously between two thousand and four thousand by the summer of 1949, with about one-fourth of the land collectivized in the Vojvodina; in Bulgaria some 20 per cent was reported collectivized by 1949, with plans for 60 per cent by 1953. The other countries were significantly slower in going ahead: Hungary had only 600 collectives covering 1 per cent of the arable land, Poland about 170 and Rumania only 55 by the autumn of 1949. The Polish collectives merely covered 23,000 acres early in 1949, but by the beginning of 1950 there were 700 covering 400,000 acres, 70 per cent of them situated in the new western territories, and the target was 2,000 by the end of 1950.—The initial impetus had differed in the several countries. The first law on labor co-operatives was the Bulgarian law of 1945, which promised them special facilities in the way of machinery, livestock, credits, etc. In Yugoslavia a special law of June 1946, allowed groups of peasants to ask that land should be allocated to them jointly under the land reform, or they could enter with each other into contracts to farm in common for a number of years; such labor co-operatives had to be approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and were put under its direct supervision, which was not the case with other types of agricultural co-operatives. The law also encouraged the establishment of co-operatives of artisans, like the Russian *artels*.—In Hungary there was in some parts of the country an agrarian-socialist tradition and a few co-operative farms were started spontaneously in the last winter of the war, before the enacting of the land reform, the peasants trying out methods of organizing labor in common. Co-operatives set up later used the experience of these pioneering units. In Bulgaria there had been some pressure to form co-operatives, largely as a fiscal measure and to facilitate the collection of supplies.

Arrangements for work and benefits varied greatly, even in one and the same country. In Czechoslovakia while technically remaining owners of their holdings, members of co-operatives were obliged to work the land of other members, if so instructed by the committee. (*The Times*, London, October 18, 1949.) The distribution of the produce was usually in relation to two factors—the amount of land which a member brought in and the amount of work he did for the co-operative, but the value given to one or the other factor varied greatly. A share of the total profits, usually 30 per cent in Hungary and Yugoslavia and 40 per cent in Bulgaria, was set aside for paying members "rent" for their land; wages for work depended on the amount and quality of a member's work; in Poland a minimum of a 100 days' work in the year was required on any job assigned. There were therefore considerable differences in the income of members; payment was made either at intervals or through credits at the co-operative stores. In most cases work was carried out on the "brigade" system for ploughing, transport, looking after animals, and so on; a member's work was

either changed frequently or according to season, though sometimes he was left to do the same work continuously. (Some details on the progress of collectivization were given in articles in the *Economist* of August 13 and 20, 1949, and February 18, 1950; and on the general policy in the *Foreign Policy Report* on *eastern Europe,* April 1, 1950, Foreign Policy Association, N. Y.—See also Arthur Ekbaum, *Destruction of Independent Farming in Eastern Europe,* Esthonian Information Center, Stockholm, 1949.)

95. By November 1949 agriculture was collectivized as to 50 per cent in Lithuania, where resistance had been sharper, as to 70 per cent in Esthonia and as to 86 per cent in Latvia. Official statements insist that the process is voluntary, but the appeals and threats which are launched repeatedly suggest rather a struggle similar to that which had occurred in Soviet Russia. (*The Economist,* March 18, 1950.)—By way of comparison, it would seem that by the end of 1949, 60 per cent of agriculture was collectivized in the new Soviet territory of Western Ukraine, where a radical land reform, giving land to poor peasants with no mention of collectivization, was carried out in 1939 after the territory had passed into Soviet hands in virtue of the agreement with Nazi Germany.

96. In Bulgaria, for instance, in 1945 the average holding of peasants who had joined co-operatives was 4.3 hectares while the average of non-members was 8.7 hectares. In Yugoslavia also it was the poorer peasants who were attracted into the co-operatives; hence there were much fewer in Croatia and hardly any in Slovenia, while there were quite a number of efficient co-operatives in the Vojvodina, set up as such on farms taken over from former German and Hungarian owners and using their equipment and livestock. Similarly in Poland, it would also appear that a much larger proportion of peasant members of the Communist Party joined the collectives in the new territories than in the old. (*The Economist,* London, May 6, 1950.)

97. *The Manchester Guardian,* October 13, 1948.

98. The Yugoslav law on peasant co-operatives of May 1949, allowed four types: from the "lower," in which only labor was pooled, to the "higher," in which both labor and land were pooled. The first and second are still capitalist and may be found in the West; in the third everything except land, the home and its contents, garden and poultry are owned in common; in the fourth land too has ceased to be private. Marshal Tito said that people preferred to join the third and fourth types. (*The Times,* London, August 9, 1949.)—In Poland there were by 1950 broadly three categories, from loosely organized groups merely for joint ploughing to full associations; but even in these the members retained a nominal right to withdraw and claim back their land. (*The Economist,* May 6, 1950.)—In the article already mentioned, M. Kardelj had suggested that the ideal co-operative would be

one combining all common activities and embracing the whole village, so that it would make possible a smooth sliding into Socialism without class divisions among the villagers. That was one of the un-Marxist ideas which provoked the ire of the Cominform.

99. The Cominform had accused Tito, among other things, of having failed to nationalize the land, but this was not possible as long as the peasants were to be allowed to remain owners of their holdings even when they joined a labor co-operative. (Bulgaria alone of the eastern countries has so far nationalized the land, by a law of 1948.) On the other hand, if a peasant wanted to withdraw from a collective he could in most places not claim his original holding but had to accept any bit of land offered him, perhaps, as in Poland, "on the fringe of the collective." (*The Economist,* May 6, 1950.)—Common farming made such a restriction inevitable. The German military authorities experimented during the War in the parts of Russia they occupied with such a mixed type of farming co-operative. They broke up the existing *kolkhozy,* because they said the Russian peasants wanted this, but they were anxious to maintain production and to be able to use the available machinery. The system they tried was to divide the land among the local peasants in individual properties, but each property was divided into a number of strips, situated in different fields. Every field consisted therefore as regards title of strips belonging to individual peasants, but each field was put under one crop, and ploughing and sowing were done as one operation for the whole field. After sowing every peasant was left to care for his particular strip, but harvesting was again done in common. Finally, each peasant was allowed private ownership of his share of the crop. It seems to have been an ingenious attempt to combine the incentive of private ownership of land and produce with the technical advantages of collective performance of the main agricultural labors. The experiment did not last long enough to show whether it was successful. (Its originator, Dr. Otto Schiller, has described it in a paper, now in the library of the Institute of Agrarian Affairs, Oxford, and kindly communicated to the writer by the director of the Institute, Mr. John Maxton.)

100. There was no set arrangement for the establishment and management of these labor co-operatives. In some instances they were set up without regard to the available equipment, as appears to have been the case in Bulgaria. In Rumania, where only a few collectives had come into being by 1950 apparently there was usually some inquiry into their chances of success. In Hungary the advance was still more cautious; permission was needed for the setting up of a co-operative and was given only after inquiry into the likelihood of good management; sometimes it was refused if there was doubt on that ground or perhaps because of the shortage of tractors. (*The Times,* Lon-

don, August 20, 1949.) Sometimes the co-operatives are run by a committee or assembly of its members, sometimes by a president. They receive many incentives in the way of technical and financial help and often are also free from certain taxes. These facilities often lead to a great increase in productivity, and the co-operatives enjoy also the moral incentive of being held up as examples. But the general effect is uncertain. In few villages have all the peasants joined the local co-operative; hence there is much competition and sometimes tense feeling between those who have joined and those who have not, which is partly what the movement was meant to produce. As regards practical results, some have failed, often through inexperienced administration, and in Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Hungary some have been closed down and reorganized. (*The Economist,* August 20, 1949.) In a number of instances their failure was due to failure in the supply of tractors and other machinery. In a speech to a Communist Party conference at the end of September 1949, the Premier of Croatia, Dr. Bakarić, complained that the peasant co-operatives were not fulfilling their obligations; but on the other hand, he admitted that the co-operatives were often disillusioned, as the State was not yet in a position to give them the assistance they had expected. (*The Times,* London, October 22, 1949.) Bulgaria would seem to have once again taken the lead in legislating a "Model Statute" for the organization of labor co-operatives. (*The Economist,* May 27, 1950.)

101. This was the substance of the criticism made in the Federal Parliament against the Yugoslav law on co-operatives by the leader of the radical Serb agrarian group, Dragoljub Jovanović. He had collaborated with Tito already during the war, but his criticism cost him his seat in Parliament and his chair at the University.

102. Even old Marxists like the Poles, Minc and Gomulka, have hesitated, and that was true of Marxist leaders in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Gomulka fell from power on this, while Minc after a summons to Moscow was apparently converted. Kostov and Kolarov in Bulgaria and Rajk in Hungary paid heavily for their disapproval of the drive against the kulaks and of collectivization. Two simultaneous news items from Bulgaria illustrated the ambiguity which pervades the whole policy: on April 30, 1950, the Bulgarian Premier, M. Chervenkov, stated that his country would follow the example of Soviet Russia in the struggle for the complete socialization of agriculture.—About the same time the Government reprimanded its Minister of Agriculture and his assistant for having tended, against the directives of the Communist Party, to force peasants into joining labor co-operatives. (*La Nation Roumaine,* Paris, May 15, 1950.)

103. The new Polish Peasants' Union formally admitted that 6,000 committee members of peasant co-operatives and

8,000 members of local executives of the Union have been expelled, obviously in connection with the drive for the new policy. (*The Economist,* May 6, 1950.)

104. *Agriculture in Eastern Europe, Foreign Policy Report,* April 1, 1950, Foreign Policy Association, New York.—The organ of the Polish Politburo, *Nowe Drogy,* recently admitted that mass collectivization had become a vital objective of their Six Year Plan. (*The Economist,* May 6, 1950.)

105. *The Economist,* January 21, 1950.

106. *World Economics and World Politics, The Manchester Guardian,* December 17, 1947.

107. Quoted by Kardelj in the *Kommunist* article of September 1947.

108. *The Manchester Guardian,* December 22, 1948.

109. *The Manchester Guardian,* May 16, 1949; and *The Times,* London, May 7, 1949.

110. See p. 23.

111. Speech to the National Agrarian Union Congress, December 30, 1947 (quoted in *East Europe,* March 1948).

112. *The World To-day,* London, November 1947.

113. *The Economist,* September 13, 1949.

114. *East Europe,* December 8, 1949.

115. There were several agrarian leaders in the Czechoslovak government; Dr. Krnjević of the Croat Party was acting Premier in the Yugoslav government, which included also Dr. Gavrilović of the Serb agrarians; M. Mikolajczyk became Prime Minister of Poland after the death of General Sikorski, and had several party members as colleagues.

116. *The Tablet,* London, March 19, 1949.

117. *A Paraszti Jovendö,* Budapest, 1948.—(The book appeared shortly before the break with Tito.) Its title means "The Peasant Future," i.e., of the country. The views of Veres were incompatible with large scale industrialization and the mechanization of agriculture; a traditional independent peasantry is to him an entity of ethical importance, not to be contaminated by industrialization or State paternalism. Since leaving the Government, Veres has lived quietly in the country, writing continuously on the life of the poor peasants and championing their cause.

118. *The Manchester Guardian,* September 10, 1948.

119. The Union held a conference in Washington in May 1950 under the name of their old grouping, the Green International, and under the presidency of Stanislaw Mikolajczyk.

120. It is not possible at this stage to know in a reliable way what the peasants of eastern Europe are thinking and doing. Occasional appeals or complaints by the authorities reveal that the peasants resent and resist the agrarian policy of the several economic plans. More interesting was the disclosure made at a conference of his Party by the editor of a Polish Communist newspaper designed for the countryside; he complained that the rural correspondents who write to his paper are disliked and

often threatened with violence by other peasants; and he then stated that since his breach with the Cominform Gomulka had become the most popular figure with the peasants and something of a hero with them. (*The Times,* London, January 17, 1950.) In Poland after the Cominform attack on Tito there were reports from many parts that the peasants were selling off their produce, horses and cattle out of fear that they would be taken away; and also complaints that quite a number of Communist organizers had been killed by the peasants. (*The Times,* January 25, 1949.)—The Premier of Croatia, Dr. Bakarić, described in October 1949 the difficulties they had with grain collection; he insisted that there was no actual shortage of grain, only a failure to collect it. He also complained that the labor co-operatives were not fulfilling their obligations: "We must tell them frankly that our needs of corn and meat are increasing; either we shall satisfy these or return to capitalism." Dr. Bakarić also admitted, however, abuses by local party members, who sometimes did not collect all the grain from poorer peasants while demanding from the richer quantities which "often seriously exceed their entire crop." (*The Times,* London, October 22, 1949.)

121. From the Cominform denunciation of June 1948 (*The Times,* June 29, 1948.) The pressure for collectivization had been greater in Yugoslavia, but pressure on the kulaks less severe. In Bulgaria and Hungary, following the Soviet practice, they were not allowed to join labor co-operatives at all, while in Poland they could become members but could not hold any executive positions. In Yugoslavia they were allowed to join if they accepted all the rules and brought in all their property, a deviation which was denounced as "protection of the kulaks."

122. *The Times,* London, August 9, 1949.

123. See Nicholas Clarion, *Le Glacis Soviétique,* Paris, 1948.—Peasant policy intended to develop in eastern Europe high-class market-gardening, fruit growing, dairy and poultry farming, and to use co-operative organization for selling these products to the West. Soviet and Communist policy is encouraging corn growing and industrial crops, and aims at the same kind of self-sufficiency which had inspired the Nazi schemes for a "New Order" in Europe.

124. See O. Halecki, *The Limits and Divisions of European History,* New York, 1950.

125. ". . . the fundamental economic problems of a Europe starving and disintegrating before their eyes, was the one question in which it was impossible to arouse the interest of the Four." (J. Maynard Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace,* New York, 1920, p. 226.)—The labor clauses of the Treaty of Versailles and the constitution of the I.L.O. were devised in consultation with Labour and Trade Union leaders, but no representatives of farmers and peasants were consulted or given a place in the governing body of the I.L.O. They later

opposed therefore the claim of the I.L.O. that it was entitled to deal with matters dealing with agricultural labor, and set up in Brussels an "International Organization of Farmers," to act at need on behalf of the agricultural interest.

126. R. H. S. Crossman, *Where Stands Democracy?* London, 1940.

127. "The need for land reform and resentment at political inferiority have been long-standing grievances in southern Asia. . . . It must be recognized that no native leadership, however popular it may be, will last unless the nationalist struggle goes hand-in-hand with a social revolution to meet the demands of the peasants." (Hilda Selwyn Clarke, *Aid to Asia?, Venture,* London, May 1950.)—When inaugurating the Indian National Commission for Co-operation with UNESCO, Pandit Nehru said that "the agrarian problem is naturally the most important problem in Asia and a body connected with UNESCO should have full appreciation of the changing picture in the Continent." (*The New York Times,* April 10, 1949.)—"Even if there were no other lesson to be gained from the Communist victory in China, it is that reconstruction must begin with the peasant and that agricultural investment must have the highest priority." (*The Economist,* London, January 14, 1950.)—See also Virginia Thompson and Richard Adloff, *The Left Wing in South-east Asia,* New York, 1950.

128. Mr. Walter Reuther, Vice-President of the C.I.O., in London on December 2, 1949. (*The Manchester Guardian,* December 3, 1949.)

129. In his *New Democracy* Mao-Tse-tung advocated an alliance of workers and peasants, realizing that alone the discontented peasants could give a mass basis for Communist action in China. It was to be a "Democratic Dictatorship of Workers and Peasants," under the leadership of the Communist Party; if heretical in theory, the idea was orthodox in its acceptance of the "objective" political situation. More recently, as his success grew, Mao-Tse-tung decided, at a plenary session of the Central Committee, to shift from a rural-agrarian to an urban-industrial orientation. (Benjamin Schwartz, *Marx and Lenin in China, The Eastern Survey,* New York, July 27, 1949.) —In a speech to Communist cadres, in April 1950, the vice-chairman of the Communist Party, Liu Shao-chi, said that they had to be "very strict" with the collection of the grain tax; at the same time he gave warning against "disorderly" application of the land reform, saying that people must not be "impatient" but must carry it out "step by step," and that it would be soon enough if "generally implemented" by the end of another three years. (*The Economist,* London, May 13, 1950.) The content and purpose of the agrarian reform law were analyzed by Liu Shai-chi in June 1950, at the second meeting of the Political Consultative Conference (text of his speech in the *China Weekly Review,* Shanghai, July 22, 1950).

130. "The peasant society, a geographically adapted element, could rarely be replaced by a commercial or collective system of equivalent productivity. . . ." (H. Bowen-Jones, paper read at the Newcastle meeting of the British Association, September 1949.—*The Times,* London, September 6, 1949.)

131. In the spring of 1950 *Pravda* rebuked Andreyev, member of the Politburo since 1931, in charge of agriculture, for the slack organization of the "work brigades." He had apparently allowed them to work in small groups, with responsibility for particular plots of land, and that hampered mechanization. Andreyev promised to reform his ways. (*The Economist,* London, March 4, 1950.)—About the same time it was announced that from then on *kolkhoz* infringements would be dealt with by the criminal courts.

132. The most outspoken confession of this change of mind was contained in an article in *Socialist Commentary,* London, June 1950. British Labour, as we have seen, was the only European Socialist party to have persisted in demanding the nationalization of land and agriculture right up to the day when it came into power, in 1945. Under the title *In Need of a Policy: Food and Farming,* the above article now criticized the Labour Government's excessive benevolence towards the farmers, and also its failure to make its position clear with regard to land ownership. As a political expedient this shelving of the issue has misfired; it has not made the Government more popular with the farmers, but it has disappointed its own supporters. However, we know by now, wrote the journal, that the Labour Party's former insistence on national ownership of agricultural land (not of built-up areas) was intrinsically mistaken. Russian set-backs in agricultural production and peasant hostility should be a warning against nationalization unless it is absolutely necessary. As it is, any misuse of the land and of the economic power that goes with its ownership can be effectively prevented if the powers given to the Government under the Agriculture Act are fully used; it is a misconception to believe that short of nationalization the land and its use cannot be controlled in the interest of the nation. The contention that nationalization is necessary in order to create large units capable of higher yields is disproved by experience. A large unit in agriculture—if defined as in industry in terms of investment of capital and use of labor—is not identical with a farm of large size; it is on the contrary relatively small in acreage. Had the Russians grasped this, they would probably never have wasted energy on the futile task of forcing relatively intensive small farms into large, non-intensive units.—In a more general way, the tendency to "get away from Marx" dominated the International Socialist Conference which met at Copenhagen in June 1950. Most European Socialist parties showed an inclination "to reject rigid theories about the inevitability of the class war and to look instead for practical ways of making a better life," a trend espe-

cially "noticeable in Scandinavia where, next to this country, Social Democracy has enjoyed its greatest European triumphs." (*The Manchester Guardian,* June 12, 1950.)

133. M. N. Roy, *The Russian Revolution,* Calcutta, 1950.

134. See p. 63.

135. In a new edition of his *Leaves from a Russian Diary* (Boston, Mass., 1950) Professor Sorokin says that the Russian revolution was a "gigantic success" in being able to establish itself, but also a "colossal failure" in some the means it had to use to that end.

136. Edmund Wilson, *To the Finland Station,* Garden City, N. Y., 1947, p. 154.

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Note. A number of sources for Marxist and Populist views on the agrarian problems are mentioned in the Notes. Only a handful of books have dealt with the controversy between these two currents of thought, and, whether coming from one side or the other, usually with reference to some particular situation. On the other hand, there is a great mass of polemical articles, reviews, etc., scattered over many publications in many languages, too many and mostly too ephemeral to be of use to the reader; while apparently there are writings of Lenin's, and probably of others, which are still unpublished. The Peasant side of the story had for the most part to be pieced together from such occasional material; the movement is new, with a philosophy and program still in the making, and no comprehensive study of it is available as yet.

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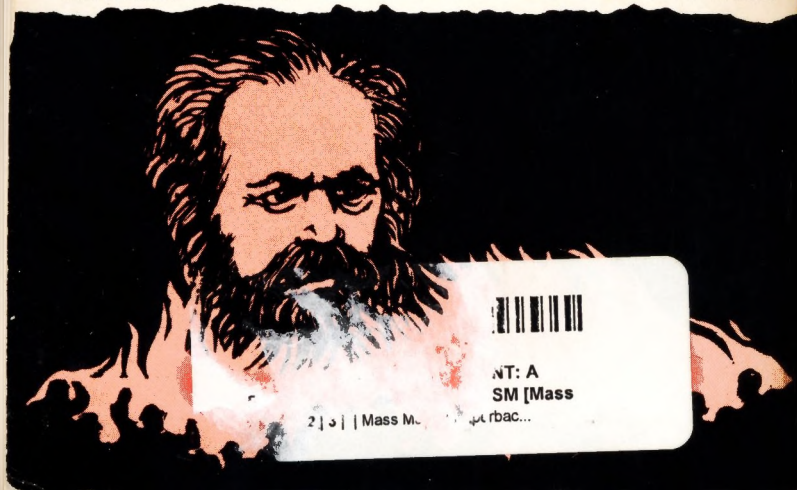
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